

POWER OF THE HERO IMAGE:  
THE UNIFORM, THE BLACK SOLDIER  
AND THE KU KLUX KLAN

by  
Kevin M. Bair

A thesis submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Liberal Arts

Baltimore, Maryland  
February 2020

© 2020 Kevin M. Bair  
All rights reserved

## Abstract

Societies have long associated the image of the military uniform with social power and heroic abilities. This iconic image has both psychological power for the wearer and for those who observed the uniformed person. In the 19th and 20th centuries, whites and blacks looked upon this image as a tool to implement change. Some sought personal improvement while others looked for social transformation. In both instances, blacks who chose to don the military uniform of the United States were seeking upward mobility from their present situation, while some whites wanting to maintain the country's segregation status quo wore the white robes of the Ku Klux Klan; thus believing in a different socially created image of power.

In this article, we argue that the cultural and psychological power of the military uniform cannot be underestimated, and that this image, when worn by black military personnel, such as Private Henry Johnson, Sergeant Isaac Woodard, and Sergeant Medgar Evers, was intimidating to a number of whites. Additionally, we believe that black military personnel, like Johnson, Woodard and Evers, helped to bring widespread awareness of the vast social injustice occurring in this country to the greater public. Furthermore, we state that the image of, belief in, and donning of, the military uniform by blacks during the 19th and 20th centuries caused the end of America's oppressive segregation laws, not only in desegregating the military (1948), but also helping topple Plessy vs. Ferguson (1896), assisted in the verdict of Brown vs. The Board of Education (1954), aided in ending the Jim Crow laws (1877-1960's), and helped to bring about the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the 1965 the Voting Rights Act.

**Primary Reader and Advisor: Mary Furgol**

**Secondary Reader: Tristan Cabello**

# Contents

Abstract.....	ii
List of Tables .....	iv
List of Figures.....	v
Introduction.....	1
The Uniform .....	4
The Heroic Soldiers.....	5
Power of Image.....	10
Houston Riots .....	21
World War One.....	25
Beaten, Shot, and Lynched.....	29
World War Two .....	33
Court-Martial.....	39
The Uniform of Justice .....	42
The Blinding of Isaac Woodard.....	43
To Secure These Rights .....	45
“The way ahead is not easy” .....	47
"Jim Crow Must Go" .....	48
Conclusion .....	51
Bibliography .....	55
Biographical Statement .....	62

## List of Tables

1 I. Jackson, Kenneth T. 1967. The Ku Klux Klan in the city, 1915-1930. New York: Oxford University Press,235. .....	31
---	----

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Public Domain. 2018. Birth of a Nation Theatrical Poster. 12 09. /wiki/The_Birth_of_a_Nation#/media/File:Birth_of_a_Nation_theatrical_poster.jpg .....	11
Figure 2. Public Domain. 2018 <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Birth_of_a_Nation">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Birth_of_a_Nation</a> .....	12
Figure 3. Bamberg Herald 1920. (2018, 11 09). The Bamberg Herald (Bamberg, South Carolina, United States of America, 14 Oct 1920, Thu, Page 1. Retrieved from Newspapers.com. <a href="https://www.newspapers.com:https://www.newspapers.com/image/354460873/?terms=December%2BUniversity%2BStudents%2B%2BKu%2BKlux%2BKlan#">https://www.newspapers.com:https://www.newspapers.com/image/354460873/?terms=December%2BUniversity%2BStudents%2B%2BKu%2BKlux%2BKlan#</a> .....	13
Figure 4. The Atlanta Constitution . 2018. The Atlanta Constitution (Atlanta, Georgia) 05 Dec 1915, Sun pg. 12. 11 08. <a href="https://www.newspapers.com/image/34115181/?terms=Klan">https://www.newspapers.com/image/34115181/?terms=Klan</a> .....	13
Figure 5. Sharpe, Joshua. 2017. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. 08 18. Accessed 12 14, 2018. <a href="https://www.ajc.com/news/local/the-last-time-the-kkk-tried-burn-cross-stone-mountain/8bwWRtm4Q3MD17E11VCiMK/">https://www.ajc.com/news/local/the-last-time-the-kkk-tried-burn-cross-stone-mountain/8bwWRtm4Q3MD17E11VCiMK/</a> .....	14
Figure 6. The Crisis _Editorial_ 1916. 2018. "Major Charles Young." The Crisis Vol. 11. No. 5 Mar 1916, 236 .....	17
Figure 7. Wharfield, H. B. Autumn, 1968. "The Affair at Carrizal." Montana: The Magazine of Western History, Vol. 18, No. 4 24-39. <a href="https://www.jstor.org/stable/4517303">https://www.jstor.org/stable/4517303</a> .....	19
Figure 8. Williams, Chad Louis. 2010. Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers In World War I Era. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 30 .....	22
Figure 9. Fraser, Colin. 2018. Henry Johnson, Known as the "Black Death" – America's First World War Hero. 11 12. <a href="https://www.warhistoryonline.com/world-war-i/black-death-henry-johnson-hero.html">https://www.warhistoryonline.com/world-war-i/black-death-henry-johnson-hero.html</a> . ....	26
Figure 10. Jamieson, J. A. (1919). Complete History of the Colored Soldiers In the World War: Authentic Story of the Greatest War of Civilized Times and What the Colored Man Did to Uphold Democracy and Liberty. . New York City: Bennett & Churchill.....	27
Figure 11. Jamieson, J. A. (1919). Complete History of the Colored Soldiers.....	27
Figure 12. Library of Congress. 2018. African American Odyssey - World War I and Postwar Society. 11 12. /ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart7.html.....	28
Figure 13. Library of Congress. (2018, 11 14). The Depression, The New Deal, and World War II. Retrieved from Memory. Library of Congress African American Odyssey : <a href="https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart8.html">https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart8.html</a> .....	35
Figure 14. National Museum of the Pacific War. (2018, 11 14). African Americans In WWII . Retrieved from National Museum of the Pacific War. <a href="http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org: http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org/your-visit/african-americans-in-wwii/">http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org: http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org/your-visit/african-americans-in-wwii/</a> .....	36
Figure 15. National Museum of the Pacific War. (2018, 11 14). .....	37
Figure 16. Wikipedia.com. (2018, 11 14). Tuskegee Airmen. Retrieved from Wikipedia.com. <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuskegee_Airmen">https://en.wikipedia.org : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuskegee_Airmen</a> .....	37

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

The scope of this paper is to discuss the culturally defined hero image associated with the iconic image of a uniform and the concomitant psychological power within the uniform. It also explores how this icon was used by black men in the military and by white members of the Ku Klux Klan, via the influence of the white supremacist trilogy by Thomas Dixon Jr. (1864 –1946) and its ensuing white supremacist film *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), to create social change in American society.

This essay also explores how generations of black men believed the uniform had the power to change their life, the life of their families, and of their race. We know through their personal sacrifice and sheer persistence that blacks and their actions eventually challenged the country's legal system forcing the country's leaders to question who was included in America's democracy. Black soldiers such as Private Henry Johnson, Sergeant Isaac Woodard, and Sergeant Medgar Evers, with their persistence and self-sacrifice for racial equality, helped to end segregation in the military in 1948, topple *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (1896) with the Supreme Court decision *Brown vs. The Board of Education* (1954) and aided in ending the Jim Crow laws (1877-1960's). Furthermore, partly through the actions of these man and many unknown others like them, the U.S. Government in 1964 created the Civil Rights Act, and in 1965 the Voting Rights Act.

The paper also includes a comparison of how both black and white males have embraced and used this hero image as a tool to create change. Black men have donned the military uniform since the Revolutionary war and used the power of its image as a tool to gain respect

and upward mobility, to enhance personal freedoms, and to challenge oppressive segregation laws. Southern white men after the Civil War also employed a self-created myth of the hero image, the uniform of the Ku Klux Klan, and used it as a weapon of terror to oppose blacks' desire for social mobility. Both groups selected or created what they believed to be an icon of self-worth, manliness, and importance; a uniformed image that represented authority and demanded respect.

Until the debut of the 1915 film *The Birth of a Nation*, the Klan was largely dormant.<sup>1</sup> The film's emphasis was on the restoration of the South's pre-Civil War Antebellum (1812-1865) way of life, using the KKK to forcibly rescind the rights given to blacks through President Lincoln's emancipation. This repeal of Union laws was performed by hooded Klansmen and its mob rule mentality. The film's premise revolved around emancipated black males who reverted to their "native" sexual lust and through uncontrollable rages raped the South's innocent white maidens.<sup>2</sup> The Klan, acting in chivalrous fashion, rides through the countryside protecting and correcting the wrongs inflicted on the South by blacks and the sympathizing Union. This movie was based on white supremacist Thomas Dixon Jr's *Reconstruction Era* (1865-1877) trilogy: *The Leopard's Spots* (1902), *The Clansman* (1905), *The Traitor* (1907)<sup>3</sup>.

Through this fictional media the Klan was reborn, and this rebirth inspired many Southern white men to rekindle the hooded image and the Klan's concept of mob rule in order to

---

<sup>1</sup> Glass, E. L. (1921). The history of the Tenth Cavalry, 1866-1921. Tucson, Ariz.: Acme Printing Company: <https://archive.org/details/historyoftenthca00glasrich/page>.

<sup>2</sup> Moyer, H. N. (1903). Medicine: A Monthly Record Of The World's Progress In Medicine And Surgery Vol. IX—January To December. Detroit: William M. Warren, Publisher.

<sup>3</sup> Jackson, K. T. (1967). The Ku Klux Klan in the city, 1915-1930. New York: Oxford University Press.

suppress blacks from gaining social mobility; particularly by interfering with their ability to vote.<sup>4</sup>

For both races, the uniform was an opiate for emotional - psychological empowerment, i.e., the power / courage needed to create social change. These men used this hero image with the belief they would gain a warrior's identity, masculinity, leadership, individual pride, social importance, and equality, and both men trusted the myth of the heroic uniform, that it contains super powers and by wearing it they could challenge and change their situations.

---

<sup>4</sup> Bump, P. (2018, 12 12). The long history of black voter suppression in American politics. Retrieved from The Washington Post. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/11/02/the-long-history-of-black-voter-suppression-in-american-politics/?utm\\_term=.2787f58821a1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/11/02/the-long-history-of-black-voter-suppression-in-american-politics/?utm_term=.2787f58821a1)



# Chapter 2

## The Uniform

Today we view the culturally derived power of the uniform in many ways. We understand the visual authority of the police, fire, and doctor attire, but many who are not in those professions may only feel the power of a uniform on special occasions. Many children dress up for the first time as the “other”, i.e., someone or something else, during Halloween, and some people find psychological empowerment by dressing up as their favorite characters for Comic Con. Regardless of the reason, when people put on a different costume than that of their ordinary life, they feel different, special, an empowerment not normally found in their lives. In changing our uniform, we can morph our perception of self.

Many societies throughout the world view the uniform as authority. To the oppressed black man, the military uniform meant a chance to change who he was. A chance for a new identity, one of pride and hopefulness, a chance to change his social position. Unfortunately, many discovered the social powers normally granted to men in military uniform were not necessarily granted to them.

# Chapter 3

## The Heroic Soldiers

The social memory of heroic soldiers fighting against the odds is enhanced with the image of them wearing their distinguished military apparel. History is filled with images of men donning uniforms, fighting and dying, defending an ideal that is in peril; heroes such as Achilles, Alexander the Great, Joan of Arc, Napoleon, Lord Nelson, George Washington, Grant, Lee, etc. Society builds up these heroes, and each hero has a specific uniform in which we identify some type of prestige, honor or glory. Even Lincoln proclaimed the greatness of men in uniform. At the battlefield in Gettysburg Pennsylvania, President Lincoln said in his address, the “last full measure of devotion” a soldier can give is his life to his country (588).<sup>5</sup>

Society has long seen the military uniform and the heroes who wore them as a symbol of power and pride. Carl G. Jung in his book *Man and His Symbols*, believes the hero myth “is the most common and best-known myth in the world” (101)<sup>6</sup>, and Joseph Campbell in his book *Power of Myth*, states “A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself” (151).<sup>7</sup>

Historically, in many societies heroes were sent from the gods in times of political or social crisis to render aid or sway a battle, such as Achilles in Homer’s *Iliad*, with his gleaming armor and indestructible shield of gold; a gift from the god Vulcan (5499).<sup>8</sup> It was not unusual for soldiers to idolize the image of great heroes. In 1914 World War One, many “young officers

---

<sup>5</sup> Lincoln, A. L. (1911). *Noted Speeches of Abraham Lincoln, Including the Lincoln-Douglas Debate*. New York: Moffat, Yard, and Company Project Gutenberg, Kindle Edition, 588.

<sup>6</sup> Jung, Carl G. 1968. *Man And His Symbols*. New York: Dell; Reprint edition, 101.

<sup>7</sup> Campbell, Joseph. 1988. *The Power of Myth*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. Anchor Books Kindle Edition, 151.

<sup>8</sup> Homer, Translated by Samuel Butler. n.d. *The Iliad and The Odyssey*. Buki Editions. Kindle Edition, 5499.

went into battle with the Iliad in their backpacks and the names of Achilles and Hector engraved upon their hearts” (42).<sup>9</sup>

This belief in the heroic uniformed image has been passed on from generation to generation, and each society savored heroes of the ancient times and created new ones. Thomas Carlyle in his book, *On Heroes, Hero Worship, and The Heroic in History*, states

”’Hero-worship’ becomes a fact inexpressibly precious; the most solacing fact one sees in the world at present. There is an everlasting hope in it for the management of the world. Had all traditions, arrangements, creeds, societies that men ever instituted, sunk away, this would remain. The certainty of Heroes being sent us; our faculty, our necessity, to reverence Heroes when sent: it shines like a polestar through smoke-clouds, dust-clouds, and all manner of down-rushing and conflagration” (102).<sup>10</sup>

Carlyle suggested the general populace would glorify a victorious warrior, and that the “completeness of his victory” against his opponent and any internal fear “will determine how much of a man he is” (16).<sup>11</sup> It seems soldiers and society believe men wearing the military uniform transforms them into something other than self. Jung believed the crucial role of the hero myth was the “development of the individual’s ego – consciousness – his awareness of his own strengths and weaknesses” (101).<sup>12</sup> Jung and Carlyle also believed a developed consciousness was needed to prepare the hero for future problematic challenges.

I believe after black soldiers enlisted and dressed in a military uniform for the first time they experienced Carlyle’s “developed consciousness”. Black soldiers felt psychologically empowered, believing their new attire was their personal armor and shield, and they now were equipped to tackle their oppressive social and personal challenges.

According to Scott E Seibert’s article in *Journal of Applied Psychology*,

---

<sup>9</sup> Garth, John. 2003. *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth*. Boston New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 42.

<sup>10</sup> Carlyle, Thomas. 1840. *On Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic In History*. London: Chapman and Hall, 102.

<sup>11</sup> Carlyle, *On Heroes*, 16.

<sup>12</sup> Jung, Carl G. 1968. *Man And His Symbols*. New York: Dell; Reprint edition, 101.

“Psychological empowerment is defined as “intrinsic task motivation reflecting a sense of self-control in relation to one’s work and an active involvement with one’s work role” ... [and it] “is composed of four cognitions: meaning, self-determination, competence, and impact. Specifically, “*meaning* refers to the alignment between one’s work role and one’s own beliefs, values, and standards. *Self-determination* is an individual’s sense of autonomy or control concerning the initiation or regulation of one’s actions. *Competence* refers to the belief in one’s capability to successfully perform work activities. *Impact* is the belief that one can make a difference in the managerial process; that one could influence operational outcomes in the work unit” (981).<sup>13</sup>

Additionally, many blacks in uniform developed “psychological empowerment” which enabled them to challenge obstacles barring their freedom thus allowing them to keep fighting with the hope to end their ongoing social oppression. Donald Moran believes the development of uniform colors and styles was built on a regiment’s reputation for victory. He states, “This was psychological warfare. A distinctive uniform of a well-known regiment would instill fear in their opponents, often causing them to retreat rather than stand and fight”.<sup>14</sup> According to retired Army Colonel, G.P. Krueger,

“There are many psychological implications of military uniforms, including the importance of style, appearance and color, as well as insignia, decorations, and so on. These contribute to togetherness, orderliness and discipline, and add to the soldiers' sense of camaraderie, cohesion, and esprit de corps. Some features contribute to formal patriotic displays”.<sup>15</sup>

Matthew Ortiz in his article *Deconstructing-The-Uniform* suggests,

“Acquiescence is a requisite of the uniform. In this understanding, the uniform is essentially a dress code to which you agree to adhere; a schema, even if it is more cognitive than deliberate. It is understood how this schema helps us to identify who is who and what it is that they do... The uniform can give us something to live up to, a role to fill”.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Seiber, Scott E, Gang Wang, Stephen H. Courtright. Mar 2011. "Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(5) 981-1003, 981.

<sup>14</sup> Moran, Donald N. 2018. *Why Did They Do That? 18th Century Military Tactics*. 10 25.  
<http://www.revolutionarywararchives.org/tactics.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Krueger, G.P. 2018. "Psychological issues in military uniform design." *www.researchgate.net*. 10 25.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286857200\\_Psychological\\_issues\\_in\\_military\\_uniform\\_design](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286857200_Psychological_issues_in_military_uniform_design).

<sup>16</sup> Ortiz, Matthew. 2018. *Deconstructing-the-uniform/*. 10 25.  
<http://psychologytomorrowmagazine.com/deconstructing-the-uniform/>.

Carrie Hertz, in her article *The Uniform: As Material, As Symbol, As Negotiated Object* states,

“Uniforms are commonly essentialized in scholarship as emblems of power, authority, and masculinity, most likely because they are readily connected to militarism and military history.... Like all clothing, uniforms operate at a symbolic level; most importantly, this genre of clothing raises interesting questions about individuality and conformity, self-control, and the visual representation of identity” (43).<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, I believe an article on *Social Identity in the Military*, found on the Applied Social Psychology website [www.psu.edu/aspsy](http://www.psu.edu/aspsy), at Pennsylvania State University, helps us to understand why many oppressed black men willingly enlisted and continued their fight for social justice. The site states, “Research has shown that groups who collectively experience pain, turmoil, catastrophe, or significant life events tend to form stronger social bonds and become more cohesive (Durkheim, 1912; Whitehouse, 1996; Whitehouse, 2012)”.<sup>18</sup>

This statement would be one explanation as to why oppressed black men as a society chose to fight war after war. They have continually shown belief in the “collective experience”, as evidenced by the 179,000 who served in the Civil War,<sup>19</sup> 350,000 in World War One,<sup>20</sup> and over 1,000,000 in World War Two.<sup>21</sup> The collective experience of past bondage caused them to enlist, and the collective experiences of military service caused them new feelings of “emotional empowerment.” This new empowerment was witnessed within their community and passed on to additional generations, either verbally or through images, i.e., photographs, lithographs, sketches,

---

<sup>17</sup> Hertz, Carrie. n.d. "The Uniform: As Material, As Symbol, As Negotiated Object." *Midwestern Folklore*, 43-58.

<sup>18</sup> Pennsylvania State University. 2018. *Social-identity-in-the-military*. 10 25.

<https://sites.psu.edu/aspsy/2015/02/27/social-identity-in-the-military/>.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Gov. National Archives. 2018. *Black Soldiers in the U.S. Military During the Civil War*. 12 10.

<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/blacks-civil-war>.

<sup>20</sup> Library of Congress. 2018. *African American Odyssey - World War I and Postwar Society*. 11 12.

<https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart7.html>

<sup>21</sup> National World War II Museum. 2018. *Research Starters: US Military by the Numbers*. 12 12.

<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/student-resources/research-starters/research-starters-us-military-numbers>.

newspapers etc. This new sense of authority caused men and their communities to have “stronger social bonds and become more cohesive”.<sup>22</sup>

The black men who enlisted are searching for what social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Charles Turner, deem as “Social Identity” and this identity “is a person’s sense of who they are based on their group membership(s)”.<sup>23</sup> And what they seek is “a positive social identity for which they enjoy, like, and see as good”.<sup>24</sup> I believe it is this longing to be a naturalized citizen of the United States, a free, proud and respected citizen, that drove generations of black men to believe in the power of the uniform myth.

---

<sup>22</sup> Pennsylvania State University. 2018. *Social-identity-in-the-military*. 10 25. <https://sites.psu.edu/aspsy/2015/02/27/social-identity-in-the-military/>.

<sup>23</sup> McLeod, Saul. 2018. *Social Identity Theory*. 10 27. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/social-identity-theory.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Pennsylvania State University. 2018. *Social-identity-in-the-military*. 10 25. <https://sites.psu.edu/aspsy/2015/02/27/social-identity-in-the-military/>.

# Chapter 4

## Power of Image

### *The Awakening*

By 1915, fifty years after the Civil War, the South developed strong sentiment for the “good old days”, those days before Sherman burnt Atlanta to the ground. Out of Sherman’s ashes arose a phoenix to avenge the South, a protector of women who had the ability to stop the blacks from taking over. This hero image was portrayed to many people, in both the North and South, in Dixon’s three novels which romanticized the Southern Antebellum (1812-1865) way of life, while glorifying how its savior the Ku Klux Klan and its mob rule law, who through terror, murder, and tyrannical actions preserved the South; with its swift illegal justice towards freed blacks, righting the wrongs which President Lincoln and the Union Army had bestowed upon *Her*. According to Thomas R. Cripps, Thomas Dixon, was “a sometime preacher, a professional Southerner, and a fretful Negrophobe” (345).<sup>25</sup>

Dixon, a former graduate student at Johns Hopkins University befriended another Southern man and graduate student, the future President of the United States Woodrow Wilson. Later, Dixon would use this friendship to arrange a private showing of the movie *The Birth of a Nation*, based on his books to President Wilson in the White House.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Cripps, Thomas R. 1963. “The Reaction of the Negro to the Motion Picture Birth of a Nation.”. *The Historian*, vol. 25, no. 3, 344–362. JSTOR, JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/24441528](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24441528), 345.

<sup>26</sup> Leiter, A. (2018, 11 09). Thomas Dixon, Jr.: Conflicts in History and Literature. Retrieved from Documenting the American South. [https://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/dixon\\_intro.html](https://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/dixon_intro.html)

According to Dixon, Wilson liked the film and congratulated him, saying that it was "history written in lightning", and during the showing Dixon claims Justice Edward White, "leaned toward me and said in low tense tones: 'I was a member of the Klan, sir...'" (349).<sup>27</sup>

In 1915, the movie *Birth of a Nation* was released to much despair among the African American communities, with its focal point demonstrating the hardships facing southern whites during the Reconstruction period. The viewpoint of the film is derived from the old Confederacy lens; vilifying blacks as brutes, buffoons, and rapists, while glorifying the Klan. Also, in 1915,

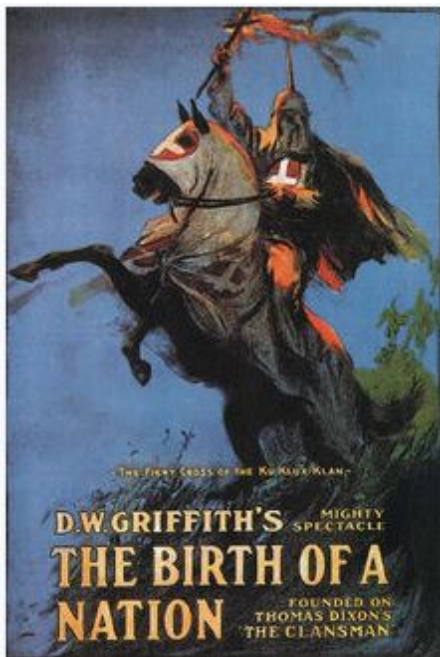


Figure 1. *The Birth of a Nation* Theatrical release poster

Paramount was distributing "another heavy-handed racist film" *The Nigger* (346).<sup>28</sup>

Figure 1 is the 1915 movie poster showing the majestic KKK white knight and his trusty steed ready to battle the foes.<sup>29</sup> Figure 2 is from the same movie where the KKK have captured a black man (white actor in black face makeup) named Gus over his lust for the flesh of a white woman.<sup>30</sup>

This film, and its message of Southern Chivalry, was the highest grossing movie until 1940 when another

<sup>27</sup> Cripps, Thomas R. 1963. "The Reaction of the Negro to the Motion Picture Birth of a Nation." *The Historian*, vol. 25, no. 3, 344–362. JSTOR, JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/24441528](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24441528), 345, 349.

<sup>28</sup> Cripps, "The Reaction of the Negro", 346.

<sup>29</sup> Public Domain. (2018, 12 09). Birth of a Nation Theatrical Poster. Retrieved from En.wikipedia.com. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Birth\\_of\\_a\\_Nation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Birth_of_a_Nation)

<sup>30</sup> Public Domain. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Birth\\_of\\_a\\_Nation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Birth_of_a_Nation)



blockbuster film dictating the wrongs done to the South by the black sympathizing North, *Gone with the Wind*.<sup>31</sup>

It was reported in the Washington Post that Dixon wrote the Clansmen out of rage after he watched a play of Uncle Tom's Cabin; based on the 1852 bestselling novel of the same name by Harriet Beecher Stowe.<sup>32</sup>



Figure 2. Captured Gus- Birth of a Nation- movie still

“The *Birth of a Nation* was ultimately viewed by more than fifty million people and had a vast influence in the shaping of popular misconceptions about the critical Reconstruction period of American history” (148-150).<sup>33</sup>

The rebirth of the Klan as a heroic symbol is significant in Southern history, as it illustrates how personal suffering and selectively chosen memories of the past can be dangerously reconstituted into a powerful motif for the subsequent generations; something we currently

witness with the ongoing controversy around the significance of Confederate statues.

In 1869, the original KKK had officially disbanded,<sup>34</sup> yet other men unofficially kept the tradition alive, and by 1871 they were completely terrorizing blacks and white sympathizers specifically in Tennessee and South Carolina.<sup>35</sup> To put an end to this chaos, Congress in 1871-1872 passed the Ku Klux Klan Acts. These “Acts was designed to eliminate extralegal violence and protect the civil and political rights of four million freed slaves”.<sup>36</sup> After the Acts were passed, President Grant sent federal troops to restore law and order. Grant's actions helped slow

---

<sup>31</sup> Hartsock, Peter I. 2018. "The unfortunate effects of 'The Birth of a Nation'". 11 2018. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-unfortunate-effects-of-the-birth-of-a-nation/2017/07/21/b6fc5920-6c1e-11e7-abbc-a53480672286\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.4216c3e37b8f](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-unfortunate-effects-of-the-birth-of-a-nation/2017/07/21/b6fc5920-6c1e-11e7-abbc-a53480672286_story.html?utm_term=.4216c3e37b8f).

<sup>32</sup> Hartsock, "The unfortunate effects"

<sup>33</sup> Jackson, K. T. (1967). *The Ku Klux Klan in the city, 1915-1930*. New York: Oxford University Press, 148-150 Kindle.

<sup>34</sup> Waldrep, Christopher. 2006. *Lynching In America: a History In Documents*. New York: New York University Press.

<sup>35</sup> U.S. House of Representatives. 2018. "'The Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871,'" History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives,. 11 08. <https://history.house.gov/HistoricalHighlight/Detail/15032451486>.

<sup>36</sup> U.S. House of Representatives.

the violence; 5,000 Klan members were indicted under these laws, including more than 1,000 convictions.<sup>37</sup>

The Government's message to the Klan was out; thousands fled, some fined or given warnings, and by 1872, the Klan as a society was in decline. It is estimated by the time Union troops ended the KKK terror, "thousands of blacks and hundreds of whites had been massacred or driven from their homes and communities".<sup>38</sup> The decline of the KKK lasted for many years until Dixon's books, particularly *The Clansmen*, was made into the movie *The Birth of a Nation*.



Figure 4. Dec 05, 1915 newspaper ad The Atlanta Constitution



Figure 3. REVIVAL OF KU KLUX KLAN. The Bamberg Herald 14 Oct 1920

<sup>37</sup> PBS. 2018. Grant, Reconstruction and the KKK. 12 10.  
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/grant-kkk/>.

<sup>38</sup> Wormser, Richard. 2018. The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow. 11 08.  
[https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories\\_events/enforce.html](https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events/enforce.html).

Figure 3 is from the 7 October 1915 edition of *The Atlanta Constitution*, proclaiming the much-awaited film about to be shown in Atlanta. It states, “The Conqueror is Coming!”.<sup>39</sup> I ask, to which Conqueror is the ad referring? The film or the Klan? The movie had such an impact on people that five years later, in *The Bamberg Herald*, 14 October 1920, there was an ad for a Klan revival in South Carolina (figure 4).<sup>40</sup> The power of the uniform displayed in the movie cannot be underestimated. The image and mystique of the hooded men portrayed as “good guys” had enough power to shape individual thought and local societies.

Before the official opening of the movie in Atlanta, on October 26<sup>th</sup> of 1915, William J Simmons applied to the State of Georgia for a permit to create a fraternal order of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>41</sup> In November, after the movie opened, his request was permitted. Simmons told his new members “he planned to revive “the ancient glories” of the Klan by lighting another fiery cross on Stone Mountain. This symbolic ritual was previously performed by the original

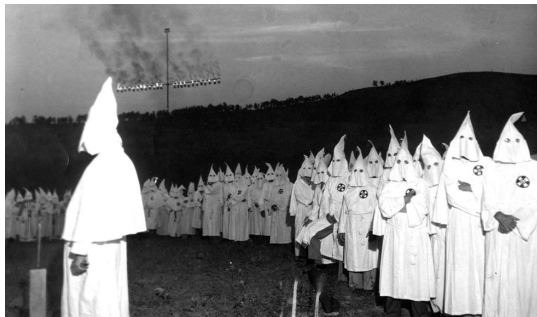


Figure 5. At an initiation ceremony for 700 members, the Ku Klux Klan burns a huge cross on Stone Mountain on July 23, 1948.

Klan, and later in 1948 they successfully burned a cross (figure 5). In 1962, they tried again but Georgia Gov. Ernest Vandiver intervened by ordering state troopers to stop them.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup> The Atlanta Constitution. (2018, 11 08). The Atlanta Constitution (Atlanta, Georgia) 05 Dec 1915, Sun pg. 12. Retrieved from Newspapers.com: <https://www.newspapers.com/image/34115181/?terms=Klan>

<sup>40</sup> The Bamberg Herald 1920. 2018. The Bamberg Herald (Bamberg, South Carolina, United States of America, 14 Oct 1920, Thu, Page 1. 11 09. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/354460873/?terms=December%2BUniversity%2BStudents%2B%2BKl%2Bux%2BKlan#>.

<sup>41</sup> Jackson, Charles O. 1966. "William J. Simmons: A Career In Ku Kluxism." The Georgia Historical Quarterly 50, no. 4 351-65. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40578787>.

<sup>42</sup> Sharpe, Joshua. 2018. The last time the KKK tried to burn a cross on Stone Mountain... 12 11. <https://www.ajc.com/news/local/the-last-time-the-kkk-tried-burn-cross-stone-mountain/8bwWRtm4Q3MD17E11VCiMK/>.

In December 1915, the group gathered on Stone Mountain near Atlanta and Simmons recalled saying in the rebirth ritual,

“on the mountain top that night at the midnight hour bathed in the sacred glow of the fiery cross, the Invisible Empire was called from its slumber of half a century to take up a new task and fulfill a new mission for humanity’s good” (233).<sup>43</sup>

So powerful was the image in 1915 of the uniformed heroes, that in some towns, the movie ushers would wear the sheets of the Klan or others would don the uniform of the beloved Confederate soldier.<sup>44</sup> In many towns, an hour or so before the movie’s screening, a Klan parade would take place with them riding through town in full regalia.<sup>45</sup> According to Jerry Wallace, male students at the University of Chicago “formed a Klavern to protect young co-eds and property”.<sup>46</sup> Lauren E. Bare explains in the Harvard Crimson, in 1921 there was an active Klan chapter at Harvard University started with the help of “an imperial officer in the Klan” and the Chicago Klan chapter.<sup>47</sup>

Martin Marger, in his book *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives*, states “From 1884 to the outbreak of World War I, more than thirty-six hundred lynching’s occurred, most in the South and with most of the victims black (Franklin, 1980). Fear and humiliation were integral parts of everyday life for blacks in the southern states” (170).<sup>48</sup>

In 1916, *The Birth of the Nation* was opposed by many, including the NAACP. They stated,

---

<sup>43</sup> Stokes, Melvyn. 2007. D. W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation*: a History of “the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time”. New York: Oxford University Press., 233.

<sup>44</sup> Stokes, D. W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation*

<sup>45</sup> Stokes, D. W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation*

<sup>46</sup> Wallace, Jerry L. 2018. The Ku Klux Klan in Calvin Coolidge’s America. 09 11.

<https://www.coolidgefoundation.org/blog/the-ku-klux-klan-in-calvin-coolidges-america/>.

<sup>47</sup> Baer, Lauren E. 2018. The Ku Klux Klan at Harvard. 11 09. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1999/2/18/the-ku-klux-klan-at-harvard/>.

<sup>48</sup> Marger, Martin N. 2015. *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives*, Tenth Edition. CENGAGE Learning. Printed in the United States of America, 170.

“The picture play called ‘*The Birth of a Nation*’ makes the power of suggestion and innuendo and slander all the more dangerous. A propaganda of this sort against colored people has long been ...used to disfranchise Negroes ... to make Negroes despised and hated, “every resource of a magnificent new art has been employed with an undeniable attempt to picture Negroes in the worst possible light” (251).<sup>49</sup>

In that same year, the First World War in Europe was escalating. In October, while soldiers were dying in battle, *The Birth of a Nation* was premiering in London at the Scala Theatre. In protest of the film, the Secretary of the *Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society* wrote to the Official Board of Film Censors,

"the play involves a gross misrepresentation of the Negro character and is calculated to stir up bad feelings against them. Consequently, we much deplore its being shown especially at a time when the colored races of our Empire are doing so much to help us in the Great War crisis"(85).<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> The Crisis \_Editorial\_ 1916. 2018. "Major Charlies Young." The Crisis Vol. 11. No. 5 Mar 1916, 251

<sup>50</sup> NAACP 1915. 1915. "The Crisis." The Crisis Vol. 11. No. 2 Whole No. 62, 85,47

# Chapter 6

## Riots, Soldier and World War One

*“Almost before the first Negro soldier left the United States to fight for his country, plans were set in motion to convince him when he returned that his war service and experience would not affect his own status after the war had ended” (112).<sup>51</sup>*



Figure 6. Uncle Sam Speak

In 1916, with World War One consuming Europe, the United States was experiencing much racial tension. Figure 5 is a political cartoon from March 1916 *The Crisis*; a black publication<sup>52</sup>. The cartoon demonstrates three very different costumes, as seen from the lens of the black editors. This cartoon is an excellent example of uniforms in action. The character of Uncle Sam in his patriotic flag uniform holding his spyglass, peering at Europe's chaos caused by the god of war Mars, who is clad in Roman Soldier attire. Sam, with his arms extended, as if wanting to calm the situation could be saying, "Whoa... where's the love? You fellows need to get along with each other...like we Americans do!" Meanwhile, Sam is ignoring the warring Neanderthal overseer of the Southern States; an ugly monster of un-democratic activities conducting its own oppressive campaigns on blacks in the South, Sam's own backyard.

<sup>51</sup> White, Walter Francis. 2001. *Rope & Faggot: a Biography of Judge Lynch*. Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001. <https://bltc-alexanderstreet-com.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/cgi-bin/BLTC/hub.py?type=getdoc&docid=S8345-D005>, 112.

<sup>52</sup> The Crisis \_Editorial\_1916. 2018. "Major Charles Young." *The Crisis* Vol. 11. No. 5 Mar 1916, 236

After *The Birth of a Nation* and the revival of the KKK, the South saw a rise in lynching's. From *The Allentown Leader*, 22 Jan 1916,

**“FIVE LYNCHED BY MOB IN GEORGIA  
- Night Riders [KKK]  
Hang Negroes From Ore Tree.  
FOUR WERE OF ONE FAMILY”<sup>53</sup>**

Lynching's became a blatant activity as in the case of black man Oscar Martin, who was charged with attacking a 13-year-old white girl. Martin, at the preliminary hearing, was dragged out of court when a mob of hundreds overpowered the court officers and then hanged from a second story balcony.<sup>54</sup> In 1916, the most horrific attack against a black happened in Waco Texas. Jesse Washington was taken from the court when found guilty of criminally assaulting a white girl. A mob dragged him to city hall, chained him to a tree, and set him on fire. According to the newspaper article in *The Daily Ardmoreite* (Ardmore, Carter, Oklahoma),

“Thousands watched...When the flames had subsided somewhat, a number of the crowd cut off the negro's fingers and other parts of the body” (1).<sup>55</sup>

Despite years of prejudice and intimidation, black males were eager to fight in Europe. To many black men, military service, even with all of its obstacles, offered them a better chance to be a “man” than civilian life would ever offer them. One early military avenue for black men was the famed Buffalo Soldiers. While the crowd watched the burning of Jesse Washington, black soldiers were about to head into Mexico. Buffalo Soldiers of C and K troops of the Tenth Cavalry were being prepared for action. In June, General John J. Pershing's Punitive Expedition

---

<sup>53</sup> The Allentown Leader. 2018. The Allentown Leader (Allentown, Lehigh, Pennsylvania), 22 Jan 1916, Sat, Page 4. 11 09. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/71369362/?terms=five%2BLynched%2Bin%2BGeorgia#>.

<sup>54</sup> Greensboro Daily News. 2018. Greensboro Daily News (Greensboro, Guilford, North Carolina), 4 Apr 1916, Tue, Page 8. 11 09. [/image/73536726/?terms=Lynched%2Bfrom%2BCourthouse#](https://www.newspapers.com/image/73536726/?terms=Lynched%2Bfrom%2BCourthouse#), 8

<sup>55</sup> The Daily Ardmoreite. 2018. The Daily Ardmoreite (Ardmore, Carter, Oklahoma, United States of America), 15 May 1916, Mon, Page 1. 11 09. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/171792013/?terms=Jesse%2BWashington#>,



force which included the Tenth Cavalry (figure 6) was ordered to find and capture Pancho Villa.<sup>56</sup> In a battle with the Mexican Cavalry, Corporal H. C. Houston of Troop K described the



Figure 710TH CAVALRY ON THE MEXICAN BORDER, MAY 24, 1916

fight,

“We then received orders to lie down and commence firing, using the battle sight. All of our men were taking careful aim at the Mexicans, and their horses were falling in every direction. But the Mexican forces were too strong for us, so even though we were inflicting terrible execution they out-numbered us too greatly for us to stop their advance around our right flank” (37).<sup>57</sup>

During the hunt for Villa, the Army made use of the Buffalo’s crack team *The Machine Gun Troop*, which originated in Ft Robinson in 1906. The Buffalos perfected this new weapon between 1907-1909 in the Philippines. They were so successful in deploying it that in 1915, a year after World War One began, the Applin's British Machine Gun Tactics manual carried an article by the Tenth Cavalry on their methods for “Indirect Machine Gun Fire” (90).<sup>58</sup>

By 1915, when *The Birth of a Nation* was rekindling thought of the KKK, the Buffalo soldiers were already a highly trained and trusted Army unit and the European powers were fighting each other for dominance. Despite the Buffalo Soldiers demonstrating decade after decade that black soldiers were intelligent, trainable and heroic, they were continually oppressed and segregated. Confrontations between black soldiers fighting discrimination against prejudiced whites and white authority finally erupted, this time on a scale much larger and deadlier than the

<sup>56</sup> Wharfield, H. B. Autumn, 1968. "The Affair at Carrizal." *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 18, No. 4 24-39. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4517303>.

<sup>57</sup> Wharfield, "The Affair at Carrizal", 37

<sup>58</sup> Glass, Edward L. 1921. *The history of the Tenth Cavalry, 1866-1921*. Tucson, Ariz.: Acme Printing Company: <https://archive.org/details/historyoftenthca00glasrich/page/90>, 90



1906 Brownsville incident where Buffalo Soldiers clashed with the residents after a soldier was accused, detained and beaten on suspicion of assaulting a white woman.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Christian, Garna L. 1995. *Black Soldiers in Jim Crow Texas, 1899-1917*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press.

# Chapter 7

## Houston Riots

In April 1917, the U.S. entered WW I, and the use of black troops was inevitable, yet many whites did not want blacks trained and armed as soldiers as they remembered the problems in Brownsville, Lakeland Florida, and other areas where the black soldiers stood up against the whites. Mississippi senator James K Vardaman declared on the senate floor that under no circumstances could black and white people live together on equal terms and that the introduction of black servicemen to the South would “inevitably lead to disaster” (30).<sup>60</sup>

The Buffalo Soldiers 24th Infantry out of Columbus, New Mexico was sent to Houston, Texas. Houston had a large black community which hoped that the black soldiers would help protect the community from the “vigilante-like” Houston police (33).<sup>61</sup> The black community openly embraced the arrival of the Buffalos. Chad Williams states in his book *Torchbearers of Democracy*, upon the arrival of the soldiers, white Houston police refused to acknowledge the authority of the black military police and would “provoke the soldiers with verbal and physical abuse”.<sup>62</sup>

On August 23, 1917, an altercation erupted between two white officers, Rufus Daniels and Lee Sparks, and black soldier Private Alonzo Edwards. Edwards and a crowd watched the officers force their way into the home of Sara Travers, a black woman and mother of five children, on suspicion of hiding two black youths they were pursuing. Once inside, Sparks verbally demeaned her, slapped her and forced her out into the street while she was partially

---

<sup>60</sup> Williams, Chad Louis. 2010. *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers In World War I Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 30

<sup>61</sup> Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 33

<sup>62</sup> Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 33

clothed. Sparks yelled “You God damn nigger bitches. Since these God damn sons of bitches’ nigger soldiers come here you are trying to take the town” (35).<sup>63</sup> Private Edwards, a confident soldier, approached Sparks, questioned his actions, and requested the release of the woman into his care. The emasculated officer beat Edwards by violently pistol whipping him and arresting him.<sup>64</sup> Edward’s confidence in approaching the white officer stemmed from his military appearance and training.

Military policeman Corporal Charles Baltimore (figure 7), while inquiring about Edwards condition, questioned Officer Sparks. Sparks beat Baltimore over the head. As Baltimore fled,



*Figure 8 Corporal Charles Baltimore*

Sparks fired several shots and promptly arrested him. Black soldiers on the base soon heard of the problem in town, and the rumor was quickly spread that Sparks killed Baltimore.<sup>65</sup>

As the day passed, anger built up at the military facility. Baltimore, once released, returned to base with a bloody bandaged head; this vision gave testimony to his fellow soldiers of his treatment by the white police. After months of abuse in town, and possibly, years of repressed feeling, the soldiers decided to retaliate.

66

Williams reports, the soldiers marched into town and a soldier yelled, “We are tired of this. We will take the law into our own hands!”, and another yelled, “To hell with France. Let’s go clean up that dammed city”. He also reports that black soldiers “attacked white residents with “reckless abandon”, that the marching soldiers acted with a “grim sense of purpose”, targeting

---

<sup>63</sup> Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 35.

<sup>64</sup> Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*.

<sup>65</sup> Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*.

<sup>66</sup> Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*.

anyone who interfered with them, especially the Houston police. The rampage lasted over three hours, resulting in fifteen dead, four were police officers, and three black soldiers (35).<sup>67</sup>

The incident spurred much debate for and against black soldiers. In the 1917 November *Crisis*, Martha Gruening writes, “The primary cause of the Houston riot was the habitual brutality of the white police officers of Houston in their treatment of colored people” (14).<sup>68</sup> *The Greenville News* of Greenville South Carolina reports,

**“Keep Negro Troops out of South,** The mutiny and riot of the negro soldiers of the Twenty-fourth infantry, with appalling consequence of wholesale murder, utterly unprovoked, will no doubt reach the consciousness of the war department” (3).<sup>69</sup>

The incident ended in court-martials, with 58 soldiers found guilty of mutiny, assault, and murder. Corporal Baltimore and twelve others on the morning of December 11, 1917 were hung at Fort Sam Houston and buried in unmarked graves. In their haste, the military did not inform President Wilson nor the press of their intent. The ensuing controversy caused the War Department to create a new policy requiring any death sentence to be fully reviewed by the President. The disgraceful handling of these men caused them to be instant martyrs, symbols of both African American resistance to racial abuse and the government’s disregard for the welfare and legal rights of the black soldiers.<sup>70</sup>

In January 1918, W.E.B. DuBois wrote, in the editorial section of *The Crisis*,

“THEY have gone to their death. Thirteen young, strong men; soldiers who have fought for a country which never was wholly theirs; men born to suffer ridicule, injustice, and, at last, death itself... we can protest and we do protest against the shameful treatment which these men and which we, their brothers, receive all our lives, and which our fathers received, and our children await; and above all we raise our clenched hands against the hundreds of thousands of

---

<sup>67</sup> Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy*, 35.

<sup>68</sup> Gruening, Martha. 2018. "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People." *The Crisis* Vol. 15. No. 1 Nov. 1915, 14.

<sup>69</sup> *The Greenville News*. 2018. *The Greenville News* (Greenville, Greenville, South Carolina, United States of America) | 3 Sep 1917, Mon • Page 3. 11 12.  
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/187850394/?terms=The%2Bhouston%2Briots#>, 3

<sup>70</sup> Williams, Chad Louis. 2010. *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers In World War I Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

white murderers, rapists, and scoundrels who have oppressed, killed, ruined, robbed, and debased their black fellow men and fellow women” (114).<sup>71</sup>

According to the Chicago Tribune on 23 December 1917, black activist Ida B. Wells-Barnett, in protest of the treatment of the thirteen soldiers, created buttons to hand out that read, “In Memoriam Martyred Negro Soldiers, Dec. 11, 1917”.<sup>72</sup> Mr. Williams reports that Wells-Barnett was investigated by the government and threatened with arrest if she did not stop selling the buttons, which she refused to do. Williams also mentioned that Wells-Barnett, in her autobiography when discussing the moment stated,

“I’d rather go down in history as the one lone Negro who dared to tell the government that it had done a dastardly thing than to save my skin taking back what I have said. I would consider it an honor to spend whatever years are necessary in prison as the one member of the race who protested, rather than to be with the 11,999,999 Negroes who didn’t have to go to prison because they kept their mouth shut” (38).<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> The Crisis. 2018. "Editorial - Thirteen." The Crisis. Vol. 15. No. 3. January 1915, 11 12: 114.

<sup>72</sup> Chicago Tribune 1917. 2018. Chicago Tribune (Chicago, Cook, Illinois, United States of America) 23 Dec 1917, Sun Page 7. 11 12. <https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/workers/civil-rights/crisis/0100-crisis-v15n03-w087.pdf>, 7.

<sup>73</sup> Williams, Chad Louis. 2010. Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers In World War I Era. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 38.

# Chapter 8

## World War One

### *Uniformed Blacks in the Argonne Forest*

Nevertheless, the history of this period is more complex than a “simple” image of black soldiers being treated as a threat. Indeed, paradoxically, the recognized bravery and performance of many black troops in World War One kept the image alive for black men that donning a uniform was a genuine path to public acceptance and equality. According to the Library of Congress, more than 350,000 blacks served in segregated units during the war, and 171 were awarded the French Legion of Honor.<sup>74</sup> Two soldiers in 1918 who distinguished themselves and improved the image of the black soldiers for years to come, were Private Needham Roberts, a native of Trenton New Jersey, and Private Henry Johnson, a former railroad porter, both members of the 369<sup>th</sup> a.k.a., the Harlem Hellfighters. The two men on night observation duty in the Argonne Forest, staved off 24 German soldiers with grenades, rifle fire and hand to hand combat.

The incident is recalled in the book *Complete History of the Colored Soldiers in the World War*, written in 1919 with attested true stories by Sgt. J. A. Jamieson, Sgt. G. I. Williams, Corp. H. White, Private Jack Allen, and Private John Graham. They state,

“When the [German] patrol came through the wire Johnson let go his grenades and Roberts emptied his rifle into the party of Huns. Roberts was wounded a moment later and fell into a shell hole, but Johnson, still on his feet, was fighting like a whole platoon. He was hit several times but kept on fighting, swinging his rifle and laying the Germans out with the butt end of it until it splintered. Then he took his bolo knife and kept on fighting until help came. His

---

<sup>74</sup> Library of Congress. 2018. African American Odyssey - World War I and Postwar Society. 11 12. /ammem/aaohhtml/exhibit/aopart7.html.

comrades found him on the ground but still full of fight, with four dead Germans and thirty-two wounded men lying about” (22).<sup>75</sup>

The action and heroism of these two men were praised in the newspapers. On July 25, 1919 a North Carolina newspaper, *The Wilmington Morning Star*, proclaims

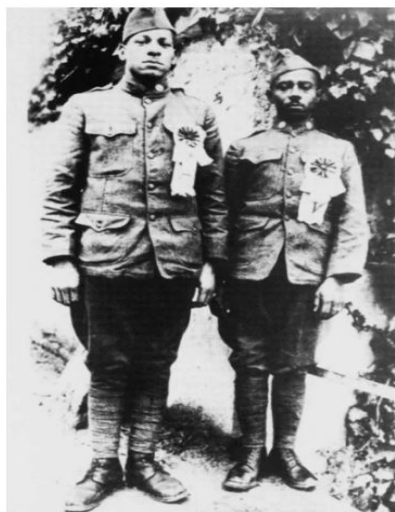


Figure 9 William Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts standing with their French Croix de Guerre medals in 1918

**“Hero of Big Fight With Huns ...** Henry Johnson, colored soldier in a New York regiment, who, with another negro, Needham Roberts whipped a patrol of twenty Germans, killing and wounding several, which exploit was duly chronicled in the press dispatches at the time ... If any one doubts the fighting ability of the colored man, or the part that he is taking in this war, we invite them to read the article below, which gives a startling account of a desperate engagement, in the dead hours of the night, between two brave colored boys, Private Henry Johnson, of this city, and a comrade by the name of Needham Roberts, and a party of about twenty Germans, who made a surprise attack on the colored boys, and although outnumbered ten to one, they outfought the whole bunch, killing several, wounding several and completely routing the balance that were glad enough to get away” (5).<sup>76</sup>

*The Marion County News* in Hamilton, Alabama, states, in big bold letters,

**“THAT BOLO KNIFE SURE CAME HANDY,** Henry Johnson, Colored Soldier, Split a Lot of Hun Skulls With the Weapon ... War Department Now Issues the Terrible Cleaver to Some of Our Troops, and the Germans Don’t Like It at All” (2).<sup>77</sup>

Articles such as these were in newspapers across the country. The two men became icons for many future black soldiers. For their heroic action, the French government awarded Johnson and Roberts the Croix de Guerre medal for bravery. They are the first Americans awarded this honor. (figure.8). According to Colin Fraser, “More than 500 men of the 369<sup>th</sup> had earned the

<sup>75</sup> Jamieson, J. A. 1919. *Complete History of the Colored Soldiers In the World War: Authentic Story of the Greatest War of Civilized Times and What the Colored Man Did to Uphold Democracy and Liberty*. . New York City: Bennett & Churchill, 22.

<sup>76</sup> *Wilmington Morning Star*. 2018. *The Wilmington Morning Star* (Wilmington, New Hanover, North Carolina), 25 Jul 1918, Thu, Page 5. 11 12. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/54550584/?terms=Henry%2BJohnson#>, 5.

<sup>77</sup> *The Marion County News*. 2018. *The Marion County News* (Hamilton, Alabama, United States of America), 31 Jul 1918, Wed, Page 2. 11 12. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/261795040/?terms=Henry%2BJohnson#>, 2.

Croix du Guerre since Johnson and Roberts and furthermore the 369<sup>th</sup> became one of the most decorated U.S. regiments to serve in WWI. They garnered the nickname the “Harlem



*Figure 10 Welcoming- a Victorious Hero. Henry Johnson, the First American of any race to receive the Croix de Guerre, being carried in triumph up Fifth Avenue on his return*

Hellfighters”.<sup>78</sup>

On 17 February 1919, parades were held in both New York and Chicago for the returning black regiments; the Eighth Illinois, and the New York Fifteenth Hellfighters. Johnson lead the segregated parade down New York’s Fifth Avenue to Harlem

(figure 9). Chad Williams suggests, “February 17, 1919

marked one of the most dramatic moments of the post war era for black Americans...The return of Chicago and New York’s black regiments unleashed the democratic energies of black people in the two metropolises, who rallied to actively reimagine their collective sense of race, nation, and community” (214).<sup>79</sup>



*Figure 11. Harlem "Hellfighters" in 17 Feb 1919 parade*

<sup>78</sup> Fraser, Colin. 2018. Henry Johnson, Known as the “Black Death” – America’s First World War Hero. 11 12. <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/world-war-ii/massacre-at-oradour-sur-glane-m.html>.

<sup>79</sup> Williams, Chad Louis. 2010. Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers In World War I Era. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 214.





Figure 12. Recruitment poster, *True Sons of Freedom*

During the war, the recruitment department wanted to boost black enlistments and hoped by using the image of the uniformed black war heroes their enlistment numbers would increase; as seen in the 1918 colored soldier recruiting poster (figure 12) by Charles Gustrine, titled "True Sons of Freedom".<sup>80</sup>

The poster shows empowered uniformed black men fighting for the country, killing and capturing German soldiers, while bi-planes soar overhead, and Abraham Lincoln

approvingly looks down upon the brave men's deadly action. A caption in the mid left side of the image states,

"COLORED MEN, The First Americans who planted Our Flag on the Firing Line".<sup>81</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Library of Congress. 2018. African American Odyssey - World War I and Postwar Society. 11 12. /ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart7.html.

<sup>81</sup> Library of Congress. African American Odyssey.

# Chapter 9

## Beaten, Shot, and Lynched

Unfortunately, the heroic deeds of these men could not stop the oppression many black soldiers faced at home. Walter White, in his book, *Rope & Faggot: A Biography of Judge Lynch*, states,

“The far South tangibly demonstrated its gratitude to Negro soldiers for helping make the world safe for democracy by lynching ten of them, some in the uniform of the United States Army, during the year 1919; two of the ten were burned alive. Mississippi and Georgia mobs murdered three returned Negro soldiers each; in Arkansas two were lynched, in Alabama and Florida one each” (112).<sup>82</sup>

According to the *Chicago Defender*, April 5, 1919, when Private William Little, a black soldier, arrived home in Blakely Georgia, a group of whites told him to remove his uniform and walk home in his underwear. He did not comply. According to the report, his only clothes were his uniform, and out of necessity continued to wear it. Little was found dead two weeks after his arrival, beaten to death while still wearing his uniform.<sup>83</sup> Vincent Mikkelsen, in his dissertation *Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War*, states, “The years 1918 and 1919 witnessed scores of black citizens lynched, as well as almost twenty black veterans” (19).<sup>84</sup>

Carter G. Woodson, reports in his book, *The Negro In Our History*,

“The Negro soldiers returning to the South were objects of contempt. To the reactionary the uniform on a Negro was like a red rag thrown in the face of a bull. Negro soldiers clamoring for equality and justice were beaten, shot down, and lynched, to terrorize the whole black population. They were not guilty of the violation of any law, but the barbarians considered it advisable to lynch a few Negroes even when it was known that they were innocent; for it

---

<sup>82</sup> White, Walter Francis. 2001. *Rope & Faggot: a Biography of Judge Lynch*. Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001. <https://bltc-alexanderstreet-com.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/cgi-bin/BLTC/hub.py?type=getdoc&docid=S8345-D005>, 112.

<sup>83</sup> Ginzburg, Ralph. 1962. *100 Years of Lynchings*. New York: Lancer Books.

<sup>84</sup> Mikkelsen, Vincent. 2007. *Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era*. Dissertation. Tallahassee: Florida State University Libraries. The Graduate School, 19.

generally resulted in intimidating others who might other-wise insist that they be treated as men” (528).<sup>85</sup>

A month after the armistice, Private Charles Lewis on December 14, 1918, was taking the train home to Alabama after being honorably discharged from Camp Sherman, near Chillicothe, Ohio. The train stopped in Fulton, Kentucky. While stopped, local police entered the train and asked passengers’ questions concerning two black citizens who had just been robbed of their possessions. When the police asked Lewis to empty his pockets and open his luggage, he refused and soon left the train. He was followed and arrested. During the evening, a “restless ‘masked’ crowd”, a mob of over 100, gathered outside the jail. The crowd forced their way into the jail, beat Lewis, removed him from the jail and town, then hung him while still in his uniform” (101).<sup>86</sup>

In 1915, ninety-nine blacks were lynched, with fifty-four in 1917, sixty-seven in 1918, eighty-three in 1919, sixty-five in 1920, sixty-four in 1921, and sixty-one in 1922. 1923 had twenty-eight, 1924 sixteen, and 1925 had eighteen, with an increase in 1926 to thirty-four, and in 1927 twenty-one (112-113).<sup>87</sup> In 1946, *The Greenville News* reports,

“In 1933 there were 28 lynchings in 11 states. By 1939 there were only three lynchings in two states. In 1940 the figure rose to five but dropped to four in 1941. In 1942 there were five again, in 1943 three, and in 1944 two” (5).<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> Woodson, Carter G. 1947. *The Negro In Our History*. Washington D.C.: The Associated Publishers. <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.50050/page/n559>, 528

<sup>86</sup> Mikkelsen, Vincent. 2007. *Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era*. Dissertation. Tallahassee: Florida State University Libraries. The Graduate School, 101.

<sup>87</sup> White, Walter Francis. 2001. *Rope & Faggot: a Biography of Judge Lynch*. Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001. <https://bltc-alexanderstreet-com.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/cgi-bin/BLTC/hub.py?type=getdoc&docid=S8345-D005>, 112-113.

<sup>88</sup> *The Greenville News*. 2018. *The Greenville News* (Greenville, Greenville, South Carolina, United States of America) 3 Sep 1917, Mon • 11 12. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/187850394/?terms=The%2Bhouston%2Briots#>, 5.

It is estimated that between 1882 and 1930, thousands of lynchings were carried out in the South(xi),<sup>89</sup> and that such violent displays constituted a weapon use to “psychologically torment” entire black communities (24).<sup>90</sup> According to Mikkelsen, “From 1915 to 1944, the Klan’s membership rose dramatically. Not only farmers, grocery store clerks and errand boys, but teachers, policemen, and even high-ranking government officials were members of the Klan” (91).<sup>91</sup>

Table 1 provides estimates of Klan Membership from 1915-1944 in select states. Nationally, between 1915 and 1944, the Invisible Empire membership had roughly 2,030,000 members (235).<sup>92</sup>

**TABLE 1: ESTIMATES OF KLAN MEMBERSHIP FROM 1915-1944**

<b>State</b>	<b># Members</b>
<b>Georgia</b>	65,000
<b>Florida</b>	60,000
<b>Alabama</b>	55,000
<b>Louisiana</b>	50,000
<b>Tennessee</b>	35,000
<b>Kentucky</b>	30,000
<b>Arkansas</b>	25,000
<b>Mississippi</b>	15,000

*Table 1 ESTIMATES OF KLAN MEMBERSHIP FROM 1915-1944*

---

<sup>89</sup> Tolnay, Stewart Emory, and E. M Beck. 1995. A Festival of Violence: an Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, xi.

<sup>90</sup> Tolnay, A Festival of Violence, 24.

<sup>91</sup> Mikkelsen, Vincent. 2007. Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era. Dissertation. Tallahassee: Florida State University Libraries. The Graduate School,91.

<sup>92</sup> Jackson, Kenneth T. 1967. The Ku Klux Klan in the city, 1915-1930. New York: Oxford University Press,235.

As the Klan grew so did its influence, some members were senators, congressmen, governors, and some named to the U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>93</sup> The era between the wars was defined by men wearing the Klan's distinctive uniform, a group desperate "to instill terror and maintain white supremacy by any means necessary... No other armed militia was more synonymous with murder or massacre after the war than the Ku Klux Klan" (91).<sup>94</sup>

I believe it would be an interesting study to look at the relationship between Klan growth and the influence it has on the conduct of white officers and soldiers towards blacks in the military.

In 1925 the U.S. War College made this statement,

"Blacks are mentally inferior, by nature subservient, and cowards in the face of danger. They are therefore unfit for combat."- *1925 U.S. Army War College Study*.<sup>95</sup>

---

<sup>93</sup> Mikkelsen, Vincent. 2007. *Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era*. Dissertation. Tallahassee: Florida State University Libraries. The Graduate School.

<sup>94</sup> Mikkelsen, *Coming from Battle to Face a War*, 91.

<sup>95</sup> Romano, Renee. 2018. *Black Soldiers In WWII*. 11 14.

[http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka\\_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers](http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers).

# Chapter 10

## World War Two

### *"Double V" campaign*

“The world’s greatest democracy fought the world’s greatest racist with a segregated Army”  
(5827-5828)<sup>96</sup>

In April 1944, in a letter to *Yank* magazine, black soldier Corporal Rupert Timmingham wrote a letter entitled *Democracy?* In it he asks common questions which I believe were on many black soldiers’ minds at the time. He asked, “What is the Negro soldier fighting for? On whose team are we playing?”<sup>97</sup> Timmingham explained in his letter, while he was on a train with eight other black soldiers from Camp Claiborne, La., being transported to the hospital at Fort Huachuca in Arizona for duty, the train had an overnight layover along the Southern train route. The next morning the black soldiers could not buy coffee at any of the lunch rooms in town, and if they wanted coffee or something to eat, they had to go into the kitchen of the train station as they were not allowed in the dining area. Timmingham states, “As you know, Old Man Jim Crow rules”.<sup>98</sup>

Timmingham’s “Old Man” statement indicates he was well aware and familiar with this type of treatment. What he did not understand was why at lunch time German prisoners of war and their guards were allowed into the dining rooms and lunch rooms in town, while he and his fellow black soldiers must eat out of sight of their fellow white Americans. Again, he asked

---

<sup>96</sup> Ambrose, Stephen E. 2013. *Citizen Soldiers: The U.S. Army from the Normandy Beaches to the Bulge to the Surrender of Germany June 7, 1944, to May 7, 1945*. New York London Toronto Sydney: Simon & Schuster Kindle Edition, 5827-5828.

<sup>97</sup> Ambrose, *Citizen Soldiers*.

<sup>98</sup> Trimmingham, Rupert, Cpl. 2018. *African - American And The War: Correspondence From Yank, 1944*. Story Of The Week. *Democracy?* 11 15. [https://loa-shared.s3.amazonaws.com/static/pdf/Trimmingham\\_Democracy.pdf](https://loa-shared.s3.amazonaws.com/static/pdf/Trimmingham_Democracy.pdf).

poignant questions about his own race, “Are these men sworn enemies of this country? Are we not American soldiers, sworn to fight for and die if need be for this our country? Then why are they treated better than we are? Why are we pushed around like cattle? If we are fighting for the same thing, if we are to die for our country, then why does the Government allow such things to go on?”.<sup>99</sup>

Trimmingham’s 1944 letter is different in context than the January 12, 1862 letter written 82 years before by black Union soldier John Boston, yet they both demonstrate the powerful allure of the military. Boston, who escaped from his bondage in Maryland; left his family in uncertain peril to join the Union army, wrote to his wife about his joy of being in the army as a free man,

“My Dear Wife

It is with grate joy I take this time to let you know  
Whare I am. I am now in Safety in the 4the Regiment  
of Brooklyn. Th Day I can Adress you thank god as a  
free man. I had a little truble in getting away But as the  
lord led the Children of Isrel to the land of Canon So  
he led me to a land Whare freedom will rain in spite of  
earth and hell” (287).<sup>100</sup>

Letters like Boston’s would explain why, by the end of 1863, some 37,000 blacks had enlisted in the Union Army, and another 3,200 served in the Union Navy on fully integrated ships.

Approximately one in five of the black soldiers who fought lost their lives for the nation.<sup>101</sup>

In their letters, both men long for civil liberties and freedom from the white man’s oppression. Both sought the uniform as a method towards upward mobility, and both knew there were limitations placed on their movement, as well as the possibility of physical dangers and

---

<sup>99</sup> Trimmingham, *African - American And The War*.

<sup>100</sup> Willis, Deborah. 2017. "The Black Civil War Soldier: Conflict and Citizenship." *Journal of American Studies*, 51 (2) 285—323, 287.

<sup>101</sup> Willis, "The Black Civil War Soldier".

death at the hands of white men. Over the centuries, the black population proved resilient to the violent tactics of white supremacy, and each time the country needed men to fight, blacks put on the uniform in her defense.

As World War Two (WWII) approached, there were fewer than 4,000 blacks in the military; with twelve serving as officers.<sup>102</sup> In dire need of more recruits to support the war, President Roosevelt, on June 25, 1941, signed Executive Order 8802 creating the first official step changing how the U.S. government treated blacks and other minorities.<sup>103</sup> The Executive Order started the *Fair Employment Practices Commission*. Kathryn Sheldon believes that in time this new law would help lessen racial discrimination in the military.<sup>104</sup>

The war was a pivotal point in blacks' quest for equality in the United States. By the end of 1945, "more than 1.2 million blacks served in uniform, on Home Front, in Europe, and the Pacific. This number also counted thousands of black women who decided to wear a uniform and joint in the war effort".<sup>105</sup>



Figure 13. *European Theater of Operations, Nurses in England, 1944*

In early 1941, the Army was still segregated however, and needed segregated nurses to care for black soldiers. The Army opened its door wide to black women interested in being a nurse (figure 13.). The Army allotted a maximum enrollment capacity of

---

<sup>102</sup> National World War II Museum. 2018. African Americans in World War II Fighting for a Double Victory. 12 12. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/sites/default/files/2017-07/african-americans.pdf>.

<sup>103</sup> Sheldon, Kathryn. 2018. Brief History of Black Women in the Military. 11 14. <https://www.womensmemorial.org/history-of-black-women>.

<sup>104</sup> Sheldon, Brief History.

<sup>105</sup> The National WWII Museum. 2017. African Americans in World War II-Fighting for a Double Victory. 11 13. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/sites/default/files/2017-07/african-americans.pdf>.



56.<sup>106</sup> In June 1943, to help black women gain access to Army nursing school, white Ohio Congresswoman Frances Payne Bolton introduced an amendment to the Nurse Training Bill to exclude any racial bias. In July 1944, the Army dropped its small quota for black nurses. Eventually, 2,000 blacks were registered for the Cadet Nurse Corps and over the course of the war more than 500 black nurses served.<sup>107</sup>

Another breakthrough happened in January 1945 when the Navy eliminated its



*Figure 14. First black Marine Officer. Second Lieutenant Frederick C. Branch*

discriminatory practices on nurses. This new ruling allowed Phyllis Daley, in March 1945, to become the first black commissioned Navy nurse.<sup>108</sup> And in November 1945, the Navy had its first black commissioned officer in the Marine Corps, Second Lieutenant Frederick C. Branch (figure 13) of Charlotte, N.C..<sup>109</sup>

When compared to World War One, black men had more opportunity for combat in World War Two. Two new areas of combat they could serve in were the all-black 761st Tank Battalion and the Tuskegee Airmen. Once trained, the Tuskegee Airmen were commissioned officers. Black men and women served honorably during the war. The 761st Tank Battalion,

---

<sup>106</sup> Sheldon, Kathryn. 2018. Brief History of Black Women in the Military. 11 14. <https://www.womensmemorial.org/history-of-black-women>.

<sup>107</sup> Sheldon, Brief History of Black Women.

<sup>108</sup> Young, Michael. 2018. African American Women in the Military during WWII. 11 14. <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/lessons/full.php?lessonID=441>.

<sup>109</sup> National Museum of the Pacific War. 2018. African Americans In WWII. 11 14. <http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org/your-visit/african-americans-in-wwii/>.

nicknamed the "Black Panthers" (figure 14), was under General Patton's command as part of the Third Army. The battalion spent 183 days in combat and captured 30 major towns in France, Belgium, and Germany.

Patton told his new tank troop,



Figure 15. 761st Tank Battalion - "Black Panthers"

"Men, you are the first Negro tankers ever to fight in the American army. I would never have asked for you if you were not good. I have nothing but the best in my army. I don't care what color you are as long as you go up there and kill those Kraut sons-of-bitches. Everyone has their eyes on you and are expecting great things from you. Most of all your race is looking forward to your success. Don't let them down, and, damn you, don't let me down!" (153).<sup>110</sup>

The Tuskegee Airmen (figure 15) were part of the 332nd Fighter Group, which consisted of the 100th, 301st and 302d Fighter Squadrons<sup>111</sup>. During the war, between May 1943 and June 1945, the Tuskegee Airmen flew more than 15,000 missions. Bomber crews often requested to be escorted by the black fighter pilots (181).<sup>112</sup>. Additionally, In June 1944 during *Operation Neptune* black soldiers were among the first soldiers to storm the beaches of Omaha and Utah.<sup>113</sup>



Figure 16. Eight Tuskegee Airmen in front of a P-40 fighter aircraft

As expected, with more blacks in the military and with the military opening more training roles to them, blacks naturally wanted to rid society of Jim Crow. Although black soldiers may

---

<sup>110</sup> Motley, Mary Penick. 1975. *The Invisible Soldier: The Experience of the Black Soldier, World War II*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 153.

<sup>111</sup> Brassfield, Christopher. 2016. American Air Museum In Britain. 12 01. Accessed 12 20, 2018. <http://www.americanairmuseum.com/unit/4082>.

<sup>112</sup> Wright, Kai. 2002. *Soldiers of Freedom: An Illustrated History of African Americans in the Armed Forces*. Black Dog & Leventhal, 181.

<sup>113</sup> Hervieux, Linda. 2015. *Forgotten: The Untold Story of D-Day's Black Heroes, at Home and at War*. New York, NY: Harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

have felt the need to express their unhappiness with the ever-present segregation laws, the military courts were not ready for the changing times; nor were many whites, who embraced the status quo. If any of the black soldiers appeared defiant to the segregation laws, they risked physical harm as well as a Court-Martial.

# Chapter 11

## Court-Martial

“We are treated like wild animals . . . like we are inhuman. . . . The word Negro is never used here, all they call us are nigger do this, nigger that. Even the officers here are calling us nigger.

Anonymous black soldiers, Jackson (Mississippi) Air Base, 1942”.<sup>114</sup>

In 1944, a young black Second Lieutenant named Jack Roosevelt Robinson confronted military racial discrimination over a seat on an Army bus; eleven years before Rosa Parks famous bus seat protest. Robinson, having just boarded the bus, decided to sit in the front next to a woman he knew. The bus driver told him to move to the back. He refused. The bus driver contacted the military police. One of the officers called to the scene was a white officer, who when speaking to another Officer referred to Robinson as “the nigger lieutenant.” Robinson who overheard that remarked is reported as to have said that he would “break in two” anyone who used that word. His defiance resulted in a court-martial.<sup>115</sup>

Robinson, a UCLA man and graduate of the Army Officer Candidate School, sought help in his case by writing to the NAACP, the Secretary of War, and several newspapers such as the Pittsburgh Courier, the Chicago Defender, and the National Grapevine. These papers also covered his trial. His government appointed lawyer, a white Texan named Capt. William Cline, established the racial biases of the parties who initially brought charges against Robinson and was able to get all charges dropped.<sup>116</sup> Robinson would later use his military experience of

---

<sup>114</sup> U.S. National Archives. 2018. Jim Crow, Meet Lieutenant Robinson. 12 12.  
<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2008/spring/robinson.html>.

<sup>115</sup> Romano, Renee. 2018. Black Soldiers In WWII. 11 14.  
[http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka\\_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers](http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers).

<sup>116</sup> Romano, Black Soldiers In WWII.

racial prejudices against him to combat opponents against his April 15, 1947 acceptance into the all-white pro baseball team the Brooklyn Dodgers. This was the beginning of desegregating American baseball.<sup>117</sup>

The black race having endured the long duration of Slavery and then additional oppression and humiliation via Jim Crow look to the black soldier as a tool, an authorized weapon, to fight for their equal rights and help defend democracy. The black press called this double conscience the "Double V" campaign.<sup>118</sup>

In WWII, as in the past wars, blacks served with distinction. Afterwards, in the largest ceremony ever held to award the *Medal of Honor*, President Truman awarded 28 to men who went above and beyond the call of duty. Of the 1.2 million blacks who served, 500,000 had duty overseas, 708 were killed in action (529),<sup>119</sup> yet not one *Medal of Honor* was awarded to a black soldier. This is not surprising, as none were awarded to a black soldier directly after WWI either. It seems, to quote Stephen Ambrose, "Old Jim Crow ruled in the Army as much as in the South" (5841-5842).<sup>120</sup>

It was not until 1997 that seven black WWII heroes finally received a *Medal of Honor*. President Bill Clinton presented the *Medal* to the only living soldier, Vernon Baker, a second lieutenant during the war.<sup>121</sup>

---

<sup>117</sup> Taha, Leila. 2018. Key Figures of Baseball Integration. 12 12. <https://www.biography.com/news/key-figures-of-baseball-integration-20728867>.

<sup>118</sup> Romano, Renee. 2018. Black Soldiers In WWII. 11 14. [http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka\\_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers](http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers)

<sup>119</sup> Clodfelter, Micheal. 2002. Warfare and Armed Conflicts: a Statistical Reference to Casualty and Other Figures, 1500-2000. 2nd ed. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland/ 529.

<sup>120</sup> Ambrose, Stephen E. 2013. Citizen Soldiers: The U.S. Army from the Normandy Beaches to the Bulge to the Surrender of Germany June 7, 1944, to May 7, 1945. New York London Toronto Sydney : Simon & Schuster Kindle Edition, 5841-5842. Kindle.

<sup>121</sup> U.S. DOD. 2018. Seven Black World War II Heroes Receive Medals of Honor. 11 14. <http://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=43307>.



# Chapter 12

## The Uniform of Justice

On July 27, 1946, page one of South Carolina's *The Greenville News*, has a small headline that states,

**“Death Asked In Nuernberg War Trials...** United States and British chief prosecutors in closing addresses today demanded that the international military tribunal convict all 22 war crimes defendants. British Chief Prosecutor Sir Hartly Shawcross demanded specifically that they be given the death penalty as common murderer of 12,000,000 people”.<sup>122</sup>

Also, on the front-page near the bottom across column 2-4 is the headline,

**“Department of Justice Will Investigate Slaying of Four Negros By Georgia Mob”.**

The article relates the story of an unmasked white mob in Monroe, GA removing four Negros from a white man's vehicle at gun point. The victims were two men and two women, couples recently married. One of the men had recently been discharged from the Army after five years of service; he had served in North Africa and Australia. According to the driver, the men had their hands bound, then were carried off and shot. The mob then dragged off the screaming women and shot them (1,5).<sup>123</sup> The article made no mention of arrests or a man hunt for the killers.

Clearly, some Southern whites were not going to allow their perceived grip on power to diminish. To maintain the status quo, many white men targeted their only direct threat - the heroic black soldier.

---

<sup>122</sup> The Greenville News. 2018. The Greenville News (Greenville, Greenville, South Carolina, United States of America) 3 Sep 1917, Mon. 11 12.

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/187850394/?terms=The%2Bhouston%2Briots#/3>

<sup>123</sup> The Greenville News, 1,5.

# Chapter 13

## The Blinding of Isaac Woodard

**“[T]his was the first civil-rights case ever heard in South Carolina” (579)<sup>124</sup>**

In February 1946, a recently honorably discharged soldier, Army Sergeant Isaac Woodard, was traveling on a Greyhound bus with a racially mixed group of other discharged soldiers. He was heading home to his wife. At some point during the travels, Woodard ask the bus driver to make a rest stop, the bus driver refused, verbally saying, “Hell, no”, in which Woodard replied, "Dammit, you’ve got to talk to me like a man” (579).<sup>125</sup>

According to George McMillan’s article in the November 23,1946 publication *Nation*, there was no further exchange between the Soldier and the bus driver. When the bus arrived in Batesburg South Carolina, Police Chief Lynwood Shull arrested Woodard.<sup>126</sup> According to Ludlow W. Werner in the newspaper, *The New York Age*, dated, 27 July 1946,

“The actual brutality came in Aiken, S. C., when 2 policemen gouged out the Negro veteran's eyes, dragged him off to jail, and then after he was fined by a judge he was sent to a veteran's hospital, where he was obliged to spend two months recuperating...” (6).<sup>127</sup>

In his deposition on 23 April 1946, Woodard testified that an hour outside of Atlanta, the bus stopped at a drug store where he asked the driver if he would wait for him while he used the rest room,

“[The bus driver] cursed and said, ‘No,’ When he cursed me, I cursed him back, After I cursed him, he said, ‘Go ahead and get off and hurry back’, so I got off, hurrying back as he said. At the next stop an hour and a half later, in Aiken Ga, the driver stopped and went to get the

---

<sup>124</sup> McMillan, George. 1946. "Race Justice in Aiken." *Nation*, vol. 163, no. 21, Nov. 579. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=13463331&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

<sup>125</sup> McMillan, Race Justice in Aiken,579.

<sup>126</sup> McMillan, Race Justice in Aiken,579.

<sup>127</sup> Werner, Ludlow W. 2018. *The New York Age* (New York, New York), 27 Jul 1946, Sat, page 6. 11 14. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/?spot=25402420>, 6.



police, he came back and came on the bus and came to me and said, ‘Come outside for a minute’, and I got off the bus. When I walked out, the police were there. As I walked out, the bus driver started telling the police that I was the one that was disturbing the bus”.<sup>128</sup>

According to Woodard, as he tried to explain his position, the officer struck him across the head with his bully club and told him to “shut up”. He goes on explaining, the officer asked him if he was recently discharged from the army and he said yes, then the officer started to hit him in the head again. Woodard then disarmed the officer and they struggled. At this point, a second officer arrived and drew his gun. As they walked to the police station, the first officer continued to beat Woodard. In the police station, Woodard was knocked unconscious. When he awoke, the officer told him to “get up”. Woodward reports, as he was getting up from the floor, the officer used the end of the bully club to punch him in the eyes.<sup>129</sup>

Mikkelsen best stated it,

“The veteran was not just another victim; he was specifically targeted because of who he was—a man trained in self-defense, who represented the greatest threat to white supremacy. He had been successful on the battlefield and came back to tell his tales of equality in France. His uniform alone represented potential in a race that southern white society continued to emasculate” (99).<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>128</sup> Woodard, Isaac Jr. 2018. Isaac Woodard, Deposition. 12 12.  
<https://faculty.uscupstate.edu/amyers/deposition.html>.

<sup>129</sup> Woodard, Deposition.

<sup>130</sup> Mikkelsen, Vincent. 2007. Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era. Dissertation. Tallahassee: Florida State University Libraries. The Graduate School, 99.

# Chapter 14

## To Secure These Rights

### To Secure These Rights

“There is no justifiable reason for discrimination  
because of ancestry, or religion, or race, or color”

President Truman. (1599).<sup>131</sup>

Woodard’s beating inspired a very public national outcry that a fierce change was needed. The old brutal ways were no longer acceptable. Black soldiers and black citizens would fight the Jim Crow system until it broke. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) helped Woodard by using his beatings to pressure Washington and President Truman to act.

Woodard, like many black men, who desired a better life, viewed the military as a pathway to social mobility. These men enlisted, risked their lives, were separated from family and friends, endured ongoing racial humiliation, and lived with the fear of lynching for being outspoken about racial injustice.

After decades of service to the country that abused them for centuries, the President of the United States, Harry S. Truman on December 5, 1946, 8 months after Woodard’s severe beating and blinding, signed Executive Order 9808, creating the first President’s *Committee on Civil Rights* (PCCR). This policy was designed,

---

<sup>131</sup> Dodd, Lynda G. Fall 2010. ““Presidential Leadership and Civil Rights Lawyering in the Era Before Brown.” .” Indiana Law Journal, vol. 85, no. 4 1599–1657. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=52702739&site=ehost-live&scope=site, 1599.

“to strengthen and safeguard the rights of the American people ... that civil rights were guaranteed by the Constitution and essential to domestic tranquility, national security, the general welfare, and the continued existence of our free institutions”.<sup>132</sup>

The final report of the committee was published in 1947 as a 178-page document entitled *To Secure These Rights*.

“WHEREAS the action of individuals who take the law into their own hands and inflict summary punishment and wreak personal vengeance is subversive of our democratic system of law enforcement and public criminal justice, and gravely threatens our form of government; WHEREAS it is essential that all possible steps be taken to safeguard our civil rights” (VIII).<sup>133</sup>

The newly appointed committee took quick action and in July 1948, the President issued Executive Order No. 9981, desegregating the Military. The order stated,

"It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin".<sup>134</sup>

This order also created the President's Committee on *Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services*. This committee provided revisions and recommendations on military regulations mandating, “equality of treatment and opportunity for all members of the armed forces, regardless of race, color, religion”.<sup>135</sup>

On May 22, 1950, the final report was released. It was entitled *Freedom to Serve*. In 1953, the Secretary of Defense reported the last segregated all-black unit had been terminated thus ending segregation in the U.S. military.<sup>136</sup>

---

<sup>132</sup> Harry S. Truman Library. 2018. Records of the President's Committee on Civil Rights Record Group 220 Dates: 1941-1947. Bulk Date Span: 1946-1947. 11 15. <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpape/pccr.htm>.

<sup>133</sup> Presidents Committee On Civil Rights. 2018. "To Secure These Rights. The Report Of The Presidents Committee On Civil Rights." Harry S. Truman Library. <https://www.trumanlibrary.org>. 11 15. <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/civilrights/srights1.htm>, VIII.

<sup>134</sup> Harry S. Truman Library, Records of the President's Committee

<sup>135</sup> Harry S. Truman Library, Records of the President's Committee

<sup>136</sup> Harry S. Truman Library, Records of the President's Committee

# Chapter 15

## “The way ahead is not easy”

President Truman (1600).<sup>137</sup>

With the military now desegregated, the Supreme Court was ready to hear and rule on Brown vs. Board of Education. On May 14, 1954, the Supreme Court ruled separate but equal in public education was un-Constitutional,

"We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal..."<sup>138</sup>

Even with the government's new law stating it was time to end segregation, many did not believe that Jim Crow's days were numbered; as blacks were still not equal or welcomed everywhere in this country. It would take years and more deaths for that to happen. For example, the 1955 lynching of 14-year-old Emmett Till, and the 1963 lynching of black WWII veteran Medgar Evers needed to happen before the 1964 landmark Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act would be passed.

---

<sup>137</sup> Dodd, Lynda G. Fall 2010. "Presidential Leadership and Civil Rights Lawyering in the Era Before Brown." "Indiana Law Journal, vol. 85, no. 4 1599–1657. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=52702739&site=ehost-live&scope=site, 1600.

<sup>138</sup> United States Courts. 2018. History - Brown v. Board of Education Re-enactment. 11 15. <http://www.uscourts.gov/educational-resources/educational-activities/history-brown-v-board-education-re-enactment>.

# Chapter 16

## "Jim Crow Must Go"<sup>139</sup>

In the early morning of June 12, 1963, WWII Army veteran Medgar Evers who fought in Normandy, was shot and killed as he entered his house after working a long day. After the war, Evers studied business in college, and in 1951 he married Myrlie Beasley. In 1952, he graduated from college and moved to Mound Bayou, Mississippi. His time in the oppressive Army gave him the skills and the reasons to pursue a career in activism. Spurred on by the 1954 ruling of *Brown vs. the Board of Education*, he set out to promote the desegregation of all public facilities and to end blacks' disenfranchisement from voting. Evers became the NAACP's secretary for Mississippi and helped organize many local protest and boycotts. It is reported that Evers was carrying a box of NAACP t-shirts that read "Jim Crow Must Go" when he was murdered (146).<sup>140</sup>

The day before Evers was murdered, President Kennedy ordered the Alabama National Guard onto the campus of the University of Alabama to escort the first two black students to classes at the previously all white university. Alabama State Governor George Wallace literally stood in the doorway as federal authorities tried to allow the students to enter.<sup>141</sup> The governor and a gathered crowd did not agree with the Supreme Court's decision on *Brown v. Board of Education*. The President and the National Guard forced the issue of desegregation and the new students entered the University (132).<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>139</sup> Williams, Byron. 2013. 1963: The Year of Hope and Hostility. Byronspeaks, 146.

<sup>140</sup> Williams, The Year of, 146.

<sup>141</sup> Bell, Debra. 2018. George Wallace Stood in a Doorway at the University of Alabama 50 Years Ago Today. 12 11. <https://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/press-past/2013/06/11/george-wallace-stood-in-a-doorway-at-the-university-of-alabama>.

<sup>142</sup> Williams, The Year of Hope and Hostility.

Kennedy and Wallace created much tension that day. Six months earlier, Wallace in his inaugural speech, said what his supporters wanted to hear, "segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever".<sup>143</sup> Kennedy, on the day he ordered the National Guard to the University, nationally televised his Civil Rights Address. Many anti desegregation people took exception to his speech. In his speech he stated,

"Today we are committed to a worldwide struggle to promote and protect the rights of all who wish to be free. And when Americans are sent to Viet-Nam or West Berlin, we do not ask for whites only. It ought to be possible, therefore, for American students of any color to attend any public institution they select without having to be backed up by troops.... It ought to be possible for American consumers of any color to receive equal service in places of public accommodation, such as hotels and restaurants and theaters and retail stores, without being forced to resort to demonstrations in the street, and it ought to be possible for American citizens of any color to register to vote in a free election without interference or fear of reprisal.... I am, therefore, asking the Congress to enact legislation giving all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public--hotels, restaurants, theaters, retail stores, and similar establishments... This seems to me to be an elementary right. Its denial is an arbitrary indignity that no American in 1963 should have to endure, but many do ... I am also asking the Congress to authorize the Federal Government to participate more fully in lawsuits designed to end segregation in public education... Our soldiers and sailors in all parts of the world they are meeting freedom's challenge on the firing line, and I salute them for their honor and their courage".<sup>144</sup>

President Kennedy was assassinated five months later on November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Evers was killed by Byron De La Beck, a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, who had fought in WWII. He fought in the Battle of Guadalcanal and the Battle of Tarawa where he was shot. He was honorably discharged in August 1945. De La Beck was associated with the white supremacy group, White Citizens' Council. It is rumored he boasted about killing Evers at KKK meetings.<sup>145</sup>

Harold H. Martin, in March 14, 1964, *Saturday Evening Post*, article said,

---

<sup>143</sup> Bell, George Wallace Stood in a Doorway.

<sup>144</sup> Kennedy, John F. . 2018. Televised Address To The Nation On Civil Right. 11 15.

<https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/historic-speeches/televised-address-to-the-nation-on-civil-rights>.

<sup>145</sup> Martin, Harold H. Mar. 1964. "The trial of 'Delay' Beckwith." *Saturday Evening Post*, vol. 237, no. 10, 77. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=18020135&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

“Medgar Evers was a Negro—and an outspoken leader of the hated N.A.A.C.P. No Mississippi jury in the memory of living men has ever sent a white man to his death for the murder of a Negro” (77).<sup>146</sup>

Martin was correct when he said, “No Mississippi jury ...has ever sent a white man to his death for the murder of a Negro”.<sup>147</sup>

Little did Martin know it would take until February 5, 1994, to convict De La Beck of Evers murder. Medgar Evers was buried June 19, 1963, in Arlington Cemetery. President Kennedy sent his brother Robert to attend the ceremony; showing his support for the Civil Rights Movement he also arranged for Mrs. Evers and her children to visit the White House. During this visit he told Mrs. Evers, “Your husband’s death will make this possible.” as he signed a copy of the future civil rights legislation (37).<sup>148</sup>

---

<sup>146</sup> Martin, "The trial of 'Delay', 77.

<sup>147</sup> Martin, "The trial of 'Delay', 77.

<sup>148</sup> Orejel, Keith. 2012. "The Federal Government’s Response to Medgar Evers’s Funeral." *Southern Quarterly* 37-55, 37.

# Chapter 17

## Conclusion

The evidence presented within this paper clearly suggests there is psychological empowerment woven within the fabrics of a uniform. Men from Homer's time believed the uniform had the power to challenge and change a society. As a culture, we understand the socially derived and unspoken authority given to the uniforms of policemen, firemen, doctors, and soldiers. Many who are not in these professions may only feel the transforming power associated with the uniform on special occasions. Children experience this feeling of being "other", i.e. someone or something else, when they dress up for Halloween, while others may find this empowerment when they don a costume as an alien or super hero for Comic Con. Costumes allow ordinary people to feel different, special, an empowering sensation within, something their daily life lacks. A uniform can breed confidence; it allows us to morph our perception of self.

In the *Iliad*, Patroclus begged Achilles to let him wear his armor into battle, "Let me moreover wear your armor; the Trojans may thus mistake me for you and quit the field" (4113-4114).<sup>149</sup>

Later we learn how effective the image of Achilles' armor was, "when the Trojans saw the brave son of Menoetius (Patroclus) and his squire all gleaming in their armour, they were daunted and their battalions were thrown into confusion" (4216-4217).<sup>150</sup>

---

<sup>149</sup> Homer, Translated by Samuel Butler. n.d. *The Iliad and The Odyssey*. Buki Editions. Kindle Edition, 4113-4114.

<sup>150</sup> Homer, *The Iliad*, 4216-4217



The image of Achilles in his battle armor stood for unimaginable strength and the power to overcome adversity, to conquer one's foe. As John Garth suggested, the ideal of Achilles' armor reverberated for new generations; it was not unusual for soldiers to idolize the image of their great heroes. In World War One many "young officers went into battle with the Iliad in their backpacks and the names of Achilles and Hector engraved upon their hearts" (42).<sup>151</sup> Society has long seen the military uniform and the heroes who wore them as a symbol of power and pride. Carl G. Jung in his book *Man and His Symbols*, believes the hero myth "is the most common and best-known myth in the world" (101)<sup>152</sup>, and Joseph Campbell in his book *Power of Myth*, states "A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself" (151).<sup>153</sup>

History is filled with images of men donning uniforms, fighting and dying, defending an ideal that is in peril; heroes such as Alexander the Great, Joan of Arc, Napoleon, Lord Nelson, George Washington, Grant, Lee, etc. Society builds up these heroes, and each hero has a specific uniform in which we identify some type of prestige, honor, or glory.

Evidence presented demonstrates enslaved blacks and later those emancipated, believed in this myth and by donning a military uniform they could change their life and their social position. Additionally, we have seen how disenfranchised Southern whites after the Civil War also used this belief to create and wear their own uniform of psychological power to bring change to their society, via the Ku Klux Klan. In this paper, we witnessed the power of their

---

<sup>151</sup> Garth, John. 2003. *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth*. Boston New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 42.

<sup>152</sup> Jung, Carl G. 1968. *Man And His Symbols*. New York: Dell; Reprint edition, 101.

<sup>153</sup> Campbell, Joseph. 1988. *The Power of Myth*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. Anchor Books Kindle Edition, 151.

uniform as it resulted in the need for the government to enact the Ku Klux Klan Acts of 1871-1872.

Furthermore, information presented reveals how the mental image of the uniformed Klan in Dixon's books, and the visual images in the film *The Birth of a Nation*, stirred a rebirth of the Klan's terroristic tactics towards blacks and their sympathizers in the South.

I believe when these black and white men cloaked themselves as the "other," they experienced what Joseph Carlyle called the "developed consciousness".<sup>154</sup> For example, black soldiers felt psychologically empowered, believing their new attire was their personal armor and shield, and they now were equipped to tackle their social and personal challenges. These men also experienced what Carl G. Jung believed is a critical development for the myth, to change into physical action, the "development of the individual's ego – consciousness – his awareness of his own strength and weakness" (101).<sup>155</sup> These men became the "other" through Scott E. Seiber's "Psychological Empowerment"<sup>156</sup>, which I believe enabled black soldiers to challenge obstacles barring their freedom allowing them to keep fighting with the hope to end their ongoing social oppression.

As stated by Richard Wormser, this mythical image of the uniform caused the Klansmen to indiscriminately massacre or drive from their homes and communities "thousands of blacks and hundreds of whites".<sup>157</sup> Yet, this same belief inspired over a million blacks to don the military uniform and fight back at their oppressors through a "collective experience".<sup>158</sup> This

---

<sup>154</sup> Carlyle, T. (1840). On Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic In History. London: Chapman and Hall.

<sup>155</sup> Jung, Carl G. 1968. *Man And His Symbols*. New York: Dell; Reprint edition, 101.

<sup>156</sup> Seiber, Scott E, Gang Wang, Stephen H. Courtright. Mar 2011. "Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(5) 981-1003, 981.

<sup>157</sup> Wormser, Richard. 2018. The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow. 11 08.

[https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories\\_events\\_enforce.html](https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_enforce.html).

<sup>158</sup> Pennsylvania State University. 2018. *Social-identity-in-the-military*. 10 25.

<https://sites.psu.edu/aspsy/2015/02/27/social-identity-in-the-military/>.

“experience” empowered 179,000 blacks to serve in the Civil War,<sup>159</sup> 350,000 in World War One,<sup>160</sup> and over 1,000,000 in World War Two.<sup>161</sup> It also meant that over 70 heroic black soldiers earned *Medals of Honor*, our nation’s highest military award.

The evidence put forth verifies how black soldiers like Private Henry Johnson, Sergeant Isaac Woodard, and Sergeant Medgar Evers, with their persistence and self-sacrifice for racial equality, helped to end segregation in the military in 1948, toppling Plessy vs. Ferguson (1896) with the Supreme Court decision Brown vs. The Board of Education (1954) and aided in ending the Jim Crow laws (1877-1960’s). Moreover, partly through the actions of these men and many unknown others like them, the U.S. Government further supported the blacks with the creation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, thus ending the laws of Jim Crow. Furthermore, despite the Ku Klux Klan and its use of the uniform, in the end it seems that Fredrick Douglass was correct in his 1863 comment asserting that the US military and its symbol of the uniform was indeed important in transforming the situation for black people as a whole:

“Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters U. S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder, and bullets in his pocket; and' there is no power on the earth, or under the earth, which can deny that he has earned the right of citizenship in the United States . . . ”.<sup>162</sup>

Fredrick Douglass

---

<sup>159</sup> U.S. Gov. National Archives. 2018. *Black Soldiers in the U.S. Military During the Civil War*. 12 10.

<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/blacks-civil-war>.

<sup>160</sup> Library of Congress. 2018. *African American Odyssey - World War I and Postwar Society*. 11 12.

<https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart7.html>

<sup>161</sup> National World War II Museum. 2018. *Research Starters: US Military by the Numbers*. 12 12.

<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/student-resources/research-starters/research-starters-us-military-numbers>.

<sup>162</sup> Holland, F. M. (1895). Frederick Douglass: the colored orator. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, <https://archive.org/details/cu31924032775318/page/n7>.

# Bibliography

## Primary Sources

- Allentown Leader. (2018, 11 09). The Allentown Leader (Allentown, Lehigh, Pennsylvania), 22 Jan 1916, Sat, Page 4. Retrieved from Newspapers.com. <https://www.newspapers.com> :  
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/71369362/?terms=five%2BLynched%2Bin%2BGeorgia#>
- Bamberg Herald 1920. (2018, 11 09). The Bamberg Herald (Bamberg, South Carolina, United States of America), 14 Oct 1920, Thu, Page 1. Retrieved from Newspapers.com. <https://www.newspapers.com>:  
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/354460873/?terms=December%2BUniversity%2BStudents%2B%2BKl%2BKlux%2BKlan#>
- Chicago Tribune 1917. (2018, 11 12). Chicago Tribune (Chicago, Cook, Illinois, United States of America) 23 Dec 1917, Sun Page 7. Retrieved from Newspapers.com: <https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/workers/civil-rights/crisis/0100-crisis-v15n03-w087.pdf>
- Daily Ardmoreite. (2018, 11 09). The Daily Ardmoreite (Ardmore, Carter, Oklahoma, United States of America), 15 May 1916, Mon, Page 1. Retrieved from Newspaper.com. <https://www.newspapers.com>:  
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/171792013/?terms=Jesse%2BWashington#>
- Greenville News. (2018, 11 12). The Greenville News (Greenville, Greenville, South Carolina, United States of America) 3 Sep 1917, Mon • Page 3. Retrieved from Newspapers.com :  
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/187850394/?terms=The%2BHouston%2Briots#>
- Greenville News. (2018, 11 14). The Greenville News (Greenville, South Carolina), 27 Jul 1946, Sat, Page 1. Retrieved from Newspapers.com. <https://www.newspapers.com>:  
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/187978649>
- Glass, E. L. (1921). The history of the Tenth Cavalry, 1866-1921. Tucson, Ariz.: Acme Printing Company:  
<https://archive.org/details/historyoftenthca00glasrich/page/90>.
- Greensboro Daily News. (2018, 11 09). Greensboro Daily News (Greensboro, Guilford, North Carolina), 4 Apr 1916, Tue, Page 8. Retrieved from Newspapers.com. <https://www.newspapers.com>:  
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/73536726/?terms=Lynched%2Bfrom%2BCourthouse#>
- Gruening, M. (2018, 11 12). National Association for the Advancement of Colored People . The Crisis Vol. 15. No. 1 Nov. 1915, p. 14.
- Harry S. Truman Library . (2018, 11 15). Records of the President's Committee on Civil Rights Record Group 220 Dates: 1941-1947. Bulk Date Span: 1946-1947. Retrieved from Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum. <https://www.trumanlibrary.org>: <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpape/pccr.htm>
- Harry S. Truman Library. (2018, 11 15). President Truman issues Executive Order No. 9981 Desegregating the Military. Retrieved from Harry S. Truman Library:  
<https://www.trumanlibrary.org/anniversaries/desegblurb.htm>

- Jamieson, J. A. (1919). *Complete History of the Colored Soldiers In the World War: Authentic Story of the Greatest War of Civilized Times and What the Colored Man Did to Uphold Democracy and Liberty*. . New York City: Bennett & Churchill.
- Kennedy, John F. . (2018, 11 15). Televised Address To The Nation On Civil Right. Retrieved from John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum: <https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/historic-speeches/televised-address-to-the-nation-on-civil-rights>
- Marion County News. (2018, 11 12). The Marion County News (Hamilton, Alabama, United States of America) , 31 Jul 1918, Wed, Page 2. Retrieved from Newspapers.com: <https://www.newspapers.com/image/261795040/?terms=Henry%2BJohnson#>
- NAACP 1915. (1915, 12). The Crisis. The Crisis Vol. 11. No. 2 Whole No. 62, p. 85.
- President's Committee On Civil Rights. (2018, 11 15). To Secure These Rights. The Report Of The Presidents Committee On Civil Rights. Retrieved from Harry S. Truman Library. <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/https://www.trumanlibrary.org/civilrights/srights1.htm>
- Trimmingham, R. C. (2018, 11 15). African - American And The War: Correspondence From Yank, 1944. Story Of The Week. Democracy? Retrieved from Library Of America. [https://loa-shared.s3.amazonaws.com/\(The Library of America, 1995\), pages 470–73 : https://loa-shared.s3.amazonaws.com/static/pdf/Trimmingham\\_Democracy.pdf](https://loa-shared.s3.amazonaws.com/(The%20Library%20of%20America,%201995),%20pages%20470-73%20:%20https://loa-shared.s3.amazonaws.com/static/pdf/Trimmingham_Democracy.pdf).
- The Crisis \_Editorial\_ 1916. (2018, 11 09). Major Charles Young. The Crisis Vol. 11. No. 5 Mar 1916, p. 241.
- The Crisis. (2018, 11 12). Editorial - Thirteen . The Crisis. Vol. 15. No. 3. January 1915, p. 114.
- U.S. House of Representatives. (2018, 11 08). "The Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871,". Retrieved from History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives,: <https://history.house.gov/HistoricalHighlight/Detail/15032451486>
- United States Courts. (2018, 11 15). History - Brown v. Board of Education Re-enactment. Retrieved from United States Courts. [http://www.uscourts.gov: http://www.uscourts.gov/educational-resources/educational-activities/history-brown-v-board-education-re-enactment](http://www.uscourts.gov/http://www.uscourts.gov/educational-resources/educational-activities/history-brown-v-board-education-re-enactment)
- Wilmington Morning Star. (2018, 11 12). The Wilmington Morning Star (Wilmington, New Hanover, North Carolina), 25 Jul 1918, Thu, Page 5. Retrieved from Newspapers.com. [https://www.newspapers.com: https://www.newspapers.com/image/54550584/?terms=Henry%2BJohnson#](https://www.newspapers.com/https://www.newspapers.com/image/54550584/?terms=Henry%2BJohnson#)

## Secondary Sources

- Ambrose, S. E. (2013). *Citizen Soldiers: The U.S. Army from the Normandy Beaches to the Bulge to the Surrender of Germany June 7, 1944, to May 7, 1945* . New York London Toronto Sydney : Simon & Schuster Kindle Edition .
- Baer, L. E. (2018, 11 09). *The Ku Klux Klan at Harvard* . Retrieved from The Harvard Crimson: <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1999/2/18/the-ku-klux-klan-at-harvard/>

- Brassfield, Christopher. 2016. American Air Museum In Britain. 12 01. Accessed 12 20, 2018.  
<http://www.americanairmuseum.com/unit/4082>.
- Bell, D. (2018, 12 11). *George Wallace Stood in a Doorway at the University of Alabama 50 Years Ago Today*. Retrieved from U.S. news.com. <https://www.usnews.com:https://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/press-past/2013/06/11/george-wallace-stood-in-a-doorway-at-the-university-of-alabama>
- Bump, P. (2018, 12 12). *The long history of black voter suppression in American politics*. Retrieved from The Washington Post. [https://www.washingtonpost.com:https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/11/02/the-long-history-of-black-voter-suppression-in-american-politics/?utm\\_term=.2787f58821a1](https://www.washingtonpost.com:https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/11/02/the-long-history-of-black-voter-suppression-in-american-politics/?utm_term=.2787f58821a1)
- Campbell, J. (1988). *The Power of Myth* . New York : Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. Anchor Books Kindle Edition. .
- Carlyle, T. (1840). *On Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic In History* . London: Chapman and Hall.
- Christian, G. L. (1995). *Black Soldiers In Jim Crow Texas, 1899-1917* . College Station: Texas A&M University Press.
- Clodfelter, M. (2002). *Warfare and Armed Conflicts : a Statistical Reference to Casualty and Other Figures, 1500-2000. 2nd ed.* . Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland.
- Cripps, T. R. (1963). "The Reaction of the Negro to the Motion Picture Birth of a Nation." . *The Historian*, vol. 25, no. 3, , 344–362. JSTOR, JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/24441528](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24441528).
- Dodd, L. G. (Fall 2010). "Presidential Leadership and Civil Rights Lawyering in the Era Before Brown." . *Indiana Law Journal*, vol. 85, no. 4, 1599–1657. EBSCOhost, [search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=52702739&site=ehost-live&scope=site](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=52702739&site=ehost-live&scope=site).
- Fraser, C. (2018, 11 12). *Henry Johnson, Known as the "Black Death" – America's First World War Hero*. Retrieved from War History Online. [https://www.warhistoryonline.com:https://www.warhistoryonline.com/world-war-ii/massacre-at-oradour-sur\\_glane-m.html](https://www.warhistoryonline.com:https://www.warhistoryonline.com/world-war-ii/massacre-at-oradour-sur_glane-m.html)
- Garth, J. (2003). *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth*. Boston New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Ginzburg, R. (1962). *100 Years of Lynchings*. . New York:: Lancer Books.
- Glass, A. (2018, 12 12). *Ku Klux Klan founded: Dec. 24, 1865*. Retrieved from Politico.com. <https://www.politico.com:https://www.politico.com/story/2016/12/ku-klux-klan-founded-dec-24-1865-232856>
- Hartsock, P. I. (2018, 11 2018). "*The unfortunate effects of 'The Birth of a Nation'*". Retrieved from The Washington Post. [www.washingtonpost.com:https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-unfortunate-effects-of-the-birth-of-a-nation/2017/07/21/b6fc5920-6c1e-11e7-abbc-a53480672286\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.4216c3e37b8f](http://www.washingtonpost.com:https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-unfortunate-effects-of-the-birth-of-a-nation/2017/07/21/b6fc5920-6c1e-11e7-abbc-a53480672286_story.html?utm_term=.4216c3e37b8f)

- Hertz, C. (n.d.). The Uniform: As Material, As Symbol, As Negotiated Object . *Midwestren Folklore* , 43-58.
- Hervieux, L. (2015). *Forgotten: The Untold Story of D-Day's Black Heroes, at Home and at War*. New York, NY: Harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.
- Homer, T. b. (n.d.). *The Iliad and The Odyssey* . Buki Editions. Kindle Edition.
- Jackson, K. T. (1967). *The Ku Klux Klan in the city, 1915-1930*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jung, C. G. (1968). *Man And His Symbols*. New York : Dell; Reprint edition .
- Krueger, G. (2018, 10 25). *Psychological issues in military uniform design*. Retrieved from [www.researchgate.net: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286857200\\_Psychological\\_issues\\_in\\_military\\_uniform\\_design](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286857200_Psychological_issues_in_military_uniform_design)
- Leiter, A. (2018, 11 09). *Thomas Dixon, Jr.: Conflicts in History and Literature*. Retrieved from Documenting the American South. [https://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/dixon\\_intro.html](https://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/dixon_intro.html)
- Library of Congress. (2018, 11 12). *African American Odyssey - World War I and Postwar Society*. Retrieved from Memory Library of Congress. <https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart7.html>
- Marger, M. N. (2015). *Race and Ethnic Relations: American and Global Perspectives, Tenth Edition*. CENGAGE Learning. Printed in the United States of America.
- Martin, H. H. (Mar. 1964). The trial of 'Delay' Beckwith. *Saturday Evening Post*, vol. 237, no. 10,, 77. EBSCOhost, [search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=18020135&site=ehost-live&scope=site](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=18020135&site=ehost-live&scope=site).
- McLeod, S. (2018, 10 27). *Social Identity Theory*. Retrieved from [www.simplypsychology.org: https://www.simplypsychology.org/social-identity-theory.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/social-identity-theory.html)
- McMillan, G. (1946). Race Justice in Aiken. *Nation*, vol. 163, no. 21, Nov. , 579. EBSCOhost, [search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=13463331&site=ehost-live&scope=site](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=13463331&site=ehost-live&scope=site).
- Mikkelsen, V. (2007). *Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era. Dissertation*. Tallahassee : Florida State University Libraries. The Graduate School.
- Moran, D. N. (2018, 10 25). *Why Did They Do That? 18th Century Military Tactics*. Retrieved from [www.revolutionarywararchives.org: http://www.revolutionarywararchives.org/tactics.html](http://www.revolutionarywararchives.org/tactics.html)
- Motley, M. P. (1975). *The Invisible Soldier : the Experience of the Black Soldier, World War II*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Moyer, H. N. (1903). *Medicine: A Monthly Record Of The World's Progress In Medicine And Surgery Vol. IX— January To December*. Detroit: William M. Warren, Publisher.

- National Museum of the Pacific War. (2018, 11 14). *African Americans In WWII* . Retrieved from National Museum of the Pacific War. <http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org>:  
<http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org/your-visit/african-americans-in-wwii/>
- National World War II Museum . (2018, 12 12). *African Americans in World War II Fighting for a Double Victory*. Retrieved from National World War II Museum :  
<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/sites/default/files/2017-07/african-americans.pdf>
- Orejel, K. (2012). The Federal Government's Response to Medgar Evers's Funeral. *Southern Quarterly*, 37-55.
- Ortiz, M. (2018, 10 25). *Deconstructing-the-uniform/*. Retrieved from psychologytomorrowmagazine.com: <http://psychologytomorrowmagazine.com/deconstructing-the-uniform/>
- PBS. (2018, 12 10). *Grant, Reconstruction and the KKK*. Retrieved from PBS. American Experience :  
<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/grant-kkk/>
- Pennsylvania State University . (2018, 10 25). *Social-identity-in-the-military*. Retrieved from sites.psu.edu: <https://sites.psu.edu/aspsy/2015/02/27/social-identity-in-the-military/>
- Romano, R. (2018, 11 14). *Black Soldiers In WWII* . Retrieved from Oberlin College:  
[http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka\\_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers](http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers)
- Romano, R. (2018, 11 14). *Lieutenant Jack Robinson*. Retrieved from Oberlin College. Democracy at Home Abroad Race Relations during WW II:  
[http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka\\_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers/ltjackierobinson](http://oberlinlibstaff.com/omeka_hist244/exhibits/show/racerelations/blacksoldiers/ltjackierobinson)
- Seiber, S. E. (Mar 2011). Antecedents and Consequences of Psychological and Team Empowerment in Organizations: A Meta-Analytic Review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(5), 981-1003.
- Sharpe, J. (2018, 12 11). *The last time the KKK tried to burn a cross on Stone Mountain...* Retrieved from The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. <https://www.ajc.com>: <https://www.ajc.com/news/local/the-last-time-the-kkk-tried-burn-cross-stone-mountain/8bwWRtm4Q3MD17E11VCiMK/>
- Sheldon, K. (2018, 11 14). *Brief History of Black Women in the Military*. Retrieved from The Womens Memorial: <https://www.womensmemorial.org/history-of-black-women>
- Sheldon, K. (2018, 12 12). *Brief History of Black Women in the Military*. Retrieved from Womens Memorial : <https://www.womensmemorial.org/history-of-black-women>
- Stokes, M. (2007). *D. W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation : a History of "the Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time"*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Taha, L. (2018, 12 12). *Key Figures of Baseball Integration*. Retrieved from Biography.com:  
<https://www.biography.com/news/key-figures-of-baseball-integration-20728867>
- The National WWII Museum. (2017, 11 13). *African Americans in World War II-Fighting for a Double Victory*. Retrieved from The National WWII Museum:  
<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/sites/default/files/2017-07/african-americans.pdf>



- Tolnay, S. E. (1995). *A Festival of Violence : an Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- U.S. DoD. (2018, 11 14). *Seven Black World War II Heroes Receive Medals of Honor*. Retrieved from U.S. Department of Defence Archives : <http://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=43307>
- U.S. Gov. Library of Congress. (2018, 12 10). *World War I and Postwar Society*. Retrieved from Library of Congress. African American Odyssey:  
<https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohtml/exhibit/aopart7.html>
- U.S. Gov. National Archives. (2018, 12 10). *Black Soldiers in the U.S. Military During the Civil War*. Retrieved from National Archives. Black Soldiers in the U.S. Military During the Civil War:  
<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/blacks-civil-war>
- U.S. National Archives. (2018, 12 12). *Jim Crow, Meet Lieutenant Robinson*. Retrieved from Prologue Magazine : <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2008/spring/robinson.html>
- U.S.Gov. National World War II Museum. (2018, 12 12). *Research Starters: US Military by the Numbers*. Retrieved from The National World War II Museum:  
<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/students-teachers/student-resources/research-starters/research-starters-us-military-numbers>
- Waldrep, C. (2006). *Lynching In America : a History In Documents*. New York: New York University Press.
- Wallace, J. L. (2018, 09 11). *The Ku Klux Klan in Calvin Coolidge's America*. Retrieved from Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation <https://www.coolidgefoundation.org>:  
<https://www.coolidgefoundation.org/blog/the-ku-klux-klan-in-calvin-coolidges-america/>
- Werner, L. W. (2018, 11 14). *The New York Age (New York, New York), 27 Jul 1946, Sat, page 6*. Retrieved from Newspapers.com. <https://www.newspapers.com>:  
<https://www.newspapers.com/image/?spot=25402420>
- Wharfield, H. B. (Autumn, 1968). The Affair at Carrizal. *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 18, No. 4, 24-39. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4517303>.
- White, W. F. (2001). *Rope & Faggot: a Biography of Judge Lynch*. Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001. <https://bltc-alexanderstreet-com.proxy1.library.jhu.edu/cgi-bin/BLTC/hub.py?type=getdoc&docid=S8345-D005>.
- Wikipedia. (2018, 11 08). *Gone with the Wind (film)*. Retrieved from Wikipedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org>:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gone\\_with\\_the\\_Wind\\_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gone_with_the_Wind_(film))
- Wikipedia. (2018, 11 08). *Gone with the Wind (novel)*. Retrieved from Wikipedia.  
<https://en.wikipedia.org>: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gone\\_with\\_the\\_Wind\\_\(novel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gone_with_the_Wind_(novel))
- Williams, B. (2013). *1963:The Year of Hope and Hostility*. Byronspeaks.
- Williams, C. L. ( 2010). *Torchbearers of Democracy : African American Soldiers In World War I Era*. . Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

- Willis, D. (2017). The Black Civil War Soldier: Conflict and Citizenship. *Journal of American Studies*, 51 (2), 285—323.
- Woodard, I. J. (2018, 12 12). *Isaac Woodard, Deposition*. Retrieved from Faculty.uscupstate.edu:  
<https://faculty.uscupstate.edu/amyers/deposition.html>
- Woodson, C. G. (1947). *The Negro In Our History*. Washington D.C.: The Associated Publishers.  
<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.50050/page/n559>.
- Wormser, R. (2018, 11 08). *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow*. Retrieved from Thirteen Media With Impact  
<https://www.thirteen.org> :  
[https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories\\_events\\_enforce.html](https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_enforce.html)
- Wright, K. (2002). *Soldiers of Freedom: An Illustrated History of African Americans in the Armed Forces*. Black Dog & Leventhal.
- Young, M. (2018, 11 14). *African American Women in the Military during WWII*. Retrieved from Harry S. Truman Presidential Library & Museum:  
<https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/lessons/full.php?lessonID=441>

# **Biographical Statement**

Kevin M. Bair is a second- year graduate History Ph.D. student at Liberty University. He received his bachelor's degree Cum Laude in Anthropology at Florida International University and a master's degree in Liberal Arts from Johns Hopkins University. He is interested in black soldiers and their oppression, Civil War diseases and the Temperance Movement along Southern waterways.